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DRAGONLANCE®

Official Game Adventure

DRAGON KNIGHT

BY RICK SWAN



Second in a fantastic series of adventures set in Krynn's lost continent of Taladas!


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DRAGON KNIGHT

BY RICK SWAN

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INTRODUCTION

Dragon Knight is the second of three modules in an epic DRAGONLANCE® series set in Taladas, the previously unknown continent on the opposite side of the planet Krynn. The first module, *Dragon Dawn,* began with an investigation of the murder of the neutral good dragons of Taladas. This led to the revelation of an organized plot to prevent a major gathering of the dragons. This module continues the investigation, climaxing with the discovery of the mysterious master of the dragon-killers.

All of the modules in the series are self-contained and can be played independently. However, if you plan to play the entire series, the modules should be played in order.

The DM should have access to the AD&D® 2nd Edition game rules to run this module. The *Time of the Dragon* boxed set describes the world of Taladas in some detail, while the *DRAGONLANCE Adventures* book describes characters and rule modifications specific to the world of Krynn. Though both are helpful resources, neither is necessary to play this adventure.

The following information is for the eyes of the DM only. The DM should familiarize himself with the entire module before beginning play.

PLAYER CHARACTERS

Eight pre-generated player characters are provided in the Appendix of this book. If the players have completed *Dragon Dawn,* they can continue with the same characters, retaining any equipment and experience acquired in the first adventure.

If a PC was killed in the previous module, the player can choose an unused character or change the name and background of the character and use the same statistics and equipment.

With the approval of the DM, players can use their own characters. A good mix of character classes is suggested, but none should be of evil alignment.

RETURNING NPCs

Some of the NPCs encountered in *Dragon Dawn* return in this adventure. If the PCs participated in the previous adventure, it's possible that one or more of these NPCs met with untimely deaths. There are two ways the DM can handle their return in *Dragon Knight.*

1. Substitute a similar NPC, preferably a relative or close friend of the indicated NPC, and use the same statistics and equipment.

2. Invoke the "obscure death" rule to explain an apparent death and subsequent return. The rule states that the circumstances surrounding the death of the character were confused and the body was not recovered. Later, the character reappears with a story of how he or she miraculously survived.

CHARACTER KITS

The *Rule Book of Taladas,* in the *Time of the Dragon* boxed set, introduced character kits to help model the different peoples and cultures flourishing in Taladas. Character kits enable characters who are identical in class but from different cultures to have special abilities, disadvantages, and knowledge appropriate to their backgrounds.

Dragon Dawn introduced several new types of characters. Two of them return in this module. Tavin Longspear, a nonplayer character, is based on the dragon knight character kit. Chyrub, a player character, is based on the legionary of Erastas character kit. For reference, record sheet templates for these two character kits can be found in the center section of this module.

The dragon knight and legionary of Erastas kit listings differ slightly from those in the *Time of the Dragon* set. The kits in this module tell whether a given skill is a weapon proficiency (indicated by a W; a specialized weapon skill is indicated by SpW). The kits also show how many slots each skill requires. Additionally, every character knows his native language automatically; because it doesn't fill one of the language slots, it's tagged Native L/0.

ABOUT TALADAS

For the benefit of those without access to the *Time of the Dragon* set, the key points relevant to this adventure are summarized below. The DM should make this information available to players unfamiliar with Taladas.

CURRENCY

As elsewhere on Krynn, the basic metal of currency is steel. One steel piece (stl) has the equivalent purchasing power of one gold piece in a conventional AD&D game world. A gold piece here is equivalent to a silver piece.

DRAGONS

The dragons of Taladas, also known as Othlorx ("the Uninvolved"), are physically similar to standard dragons, but their attitudes are markedly different. When Takhisis (called "Erestem" in Taladas) released the evil dragons into Krynn, she expected all of them to fight with her in the War of the Lance. More than a few saw no gain for themselves, so they refused to join the Dark Queen. Infuriated, Erestem cursed them to become the first of the Othlorx. Though most good dragons joined the War of the Lance following the discovery of the draconian hatcheries, some chose to remain in Taladas. While the dragons of Ansalon have been deeply involved in the War of the Lance, the good Othlorx of Taladas have remained intentionally neutral in the struggle against Erestem and her minions.

DWARVES

The mountain and hill dwarves native to Ansalon are found only in small, widely scattered communities in Taladas. More common are the Nylgai Hadirnoe (also known as the Scorned Dwarves, a deep-dwelling race who shun the bright sunlight) and the Fianawar (dour, unhappy surface-dwellers). The gully dwarves of Ansalon are virtually unknown in Taladas. Players wishing to use dwarves as PCs are advised to consult the *Time of the Dragon* set.

ELVES

Most Taladas elves are from the Elf Clans (wild and dangerous) and Silvanaes (intelligent and well-bred). A few are Hulderfolk (shy and withdrawn) and Cha'anii (practitioners of nature magic). Elves common to Ansalon—Silvanesti,

Qualinesti, and Kagonesti—are few and far between. Players wishing to use elves as PCs are advised to consult the *Time of the Dragon* set.

Kender

Kender are very rare on Taladas, but there are small pockets of kender whose attitudes are similar to those of their Ansalon cousins, though the Taladas kender tend to be more suspicious and distrustful. Taladas kender are immune to all types of fear and have the special ability to taunt opponents into reckless attacks by verbally abusing them. Any creature taunted by a kender must roll a successful saving throw vs. spell or attack wildly for 1d10 rounds with a –2 penalty for all attack rolls and a +2 penalty to its Armor Class.

Wizards

By the standards of Ansalon, virtually all Taladas wizards are renegades. Although Taladas is bound by the phases of the three moons, Taladas wizards have not adopted the conventions or restrictions set forth by the Towers of High Sorcery in Ansalon. However, each Taladas wizard, regardless of whether he is a mage or a specialist, must choose one of the moons to guide his path. Each choice is associated with one of the three alignments—good, neutrality, and evil—with corresponding restrictions and consequences (see the "Moons of Krynn" section for details).

Adventuring in Krynn

Krynn adventures stress a different set of values than is usual in conventional AD&D® game settings. Instead of exploring mysterious places, accumulating treasure, and fighting powerful monsters, DRAGONLANCE® modules stress a strong story line.

While players do encounter their fair share of mysterious places and powerful monsters, these types of encounters should take a back seat to the story itself. A successful adventure in Krynn has the feel of an epic novel, a sweeping story in which the player characters are vital participants.

Krynn adventures also stress a value system based on strong principles. The most important of these principles are given below:

- Persevering forces of good can triumph over evil.
- Good actions have good consequences; evil actions have evil consequences.
- Truth, justice, and honor must be promoted over deceit, injustice, and selfishness.

This adventure is based on these principles. The DM should make sure they hold true.

Running the Adventure

Organization

Unlike the case in other modules, the PCs aren't likely to move through the chapters in sequence. Depending on their actions, they may move from Chapter 2 to Chapter 4, back to Chapter 2, and so on. Though there are clear guidelines for moving between chapters in the text, it's important for the DM to become familiar with the entire module before play begins to get a sense of the structure.

Boxed text may be read directly to the players, or it may be paraphrased by the DM.

Maps

The enclosed fold-out color map shows the area where the adventure takes place, a treacherous and little-explored area of Taladas known informally as the Southern Steamwall. The map can be used as a playing aid as the DM sees fit.

The four-color map on the module cover shows an overview of the regions featured in the adventure. On the inside center panel is the DM's Map, a smaller version of the fold-out map. This map shows the locations of the encounters in the text and is exclusively for the use of the DM. Tactical maps for specific encounters are included in the center section of the module and on the inside module cover.

Movement

Under normal conditions, an unencumbered human character can walk 24 miles across normal terrain in a ten-hour day. At this rate, he could travel a distance equal to just under 2.5 inches (2.4 to be exact) on the color fold-out map if the terrain is normal. He can travel 12 miles per day in rugged terrain, and six miles per day in very rugged terrain.

For convenience, terrain types are defined as follows:

Normal: Plains, grassland, open rolling ground, trails through normal and rugged terrain, roads through all terrain types
Rugged: Hills, foothills, forests, trails through very rugged terrain
Very Rugged Terrain: Jungles, swamps, mountains, volcanoes

These movement rates are only generalizations. For instance, the rates are increased if the PCs push themselves and are decreased if the PCs are heavily encumbered. The DM can make adjustments as necessary, but he's encouraged to be generous—it's only necessary to approximate the PCs' daily progress as they make their way across the map.

Pages 119-120 of the *Player's Handbook* give some additional guidelines for movement. Those who want more details should consult the *Wilderness Survival Guide.*

Time

Beginning in Chapter 2, keep track of the passage of time on a piece of scrap paper. While it's seldom important to know the precise hour of the day, you should know when night falls and the total number of days that have passed.

Encounters

Encounters are adventure episodes keyed to specific areas on the map. When the PCs cross the border of a new area (indicated on the DM's Map on the inside cover of the module), refer to the corresponding number in the text; the encounter occurs immediately. In many cases, the text explains what happens if the PCs make a return visit. Otherwise, either rerun the same encounter or use common sense to adjust the encounter. For instance, if the PCs chopped down a tree in a certain encounter area, the tree is still destroyed if they return.

Encounter Zones

Many of the encounter areas are designated as Encounter Zones. The party has an immediate encounter when they first enter an Encounter Zone. When the PCs first cross the border of an Encounter Zone, roll as indicated in the text to randomly select an encounter from the listed possibilities. The PCs experience this encounter immediately. If the PCs remain in the Encounter Zone or return to it later, roll for another encounter as directed.



Encounter Zones often include information that is of special significance to the adventure. For that reason, the DM should not feel restricted by the whim of the dice. Instead of rolling randomly, the DM may select a specific encounter from the list. Likewise, he may forgo all of the listed encounters if he feels the PCs are too weak, are getting bogged down, or have already received enough clues. Unless otherwise indicated, encounters may be repeated at the DM's discretion.

The Moons of Krynn

The positions of Krynn's moons play an important part in this adventure. The Lunar Display Wheel, located in the center section of the module, should be used to note the location of the moons. (The Moon Reading Chart, also found in the center section of the module, is explained in Chapter 2.)

If you played the previous module and were keeping track of the moons, you can begin this adventure with the moons in those locations. Otherwise, roll 1d8 for each moon and place a coin or marker in the indicated box along its orbit. Advance the moons one box per game day to keep track of their positions. (Because the moons aren't relevant until Chapter 2, it's not necessary to keep track of the moons' positions until then.)

The names of the moons differ from Taladas to Ansalon. The moon of good, called Solinari in Ansalon, is known at Solais in Taladas. Lunais, called Lunitari in Ansalon, is the moon of neutrality, while Angomais, known as Nuitari in Ansalon, is the moon of evil.

Although the wizards of Taladas aren't divided into orders like their counterparts on Ansalon, each is affected by the phases of his chosen moon once he reaches 4th level. The phases and alignments of the moons can increase or decrease the potency of a wizard's magic. The effects of the different moons are shown in Tables 1 and 2.

Table 1: Moon Phase Effects *

Moon Phase	Saving Throw **	Additional Spells †	Effective level ‡
New moon	–1	0	–1
Waxing	0	+1	0
Full	+1	+2	+1
Waning	0	0	0

Table 2: Moon Alignment Effects

	Saving Throw **	Additional Spells †	Effective level ‡
S with L	+1	+1	+1
L with A	+1	+1	+1
S with A	+1	0	0
All three	+2	+2	0

S = Solais, L = Lunais, A = Angomais

* A wizard of level 1-3 is unaffected by the phases of the moons because of the low power levels involved in his spells.

** The saving throw category lists the modifier applied to all saving throws rolled by the affected wizard. It has no effect on the saving throws of spells cast by the wizard.

† This benefit is gained only by wizards of 6th level or greater who also have an Intelligence of 15 or more. Additional spells gained by the wizard can be selected from any level of spell the wizard is allowed to cast.

‡ The effective level modifier increases the affected wizard's level only for those spells he already knows. It doesn't allow the wizard to cast spells unknown to him; it only applies to such factors as range and effect for spells currently in his repertoire.

The benefits of the various lunar alignments affect only those wizards who follow the given moons. Therefore, when Lunais and Angomais align, only evil and neutral wizards receive the benefits. The effects of the lunar phases and alignments are cumulative.

The Story Thus Far

Note to the DM

The following section summarizes the events of the first module, Dragon Dawn. If you've played that module, feel free to incorporate any details from your version of the story, taking care not to alter the basic plot.

Audience with the Baron

Baron Althen ordered his chief forester to recruit a party of accomplished adventurers to bring those who had slain his hatchling copper dragons to justice. A few days later, the forester located a suitable group of able men and women and promptly brought them to Rathwyck for the Baron's inspection. The Baron offered them the job. The adventurers accepted the offer, and after negotiating suitable compensation, they began the search.

Aided by Derry Althen (the enthusiastic but inexperienced daughter of the Baron), Tavin Longspear (a rugged and courageous Dragon Knight), and Gabus (the loyal copper dragon companion of Tavin), the adventurers picked up the trail of the dragon killers. Eventually they tracked them to a secluded area of the Marak Valleys known as the Pillars of the Moon. The killers were led by a powerful priestess from Thenol named Anishta. Her allies included a lizard-like warrior named Tekolo, a foul-mouthed dwarf named Pollip, an ogre shaman named Kohver, and an insolent elf mage named Dagobert. The dragon killers had no intention of allowing the adventurers to interfere with their profitable activities and vowed to destroy them.

In the ensuing battle, the dragon killers were defeated by the adventurers in a bloody showdown. The captured Anishta blurted out a confession. "We were hired to kill dragons," she said. "Somebody rich and mighty and far away wants those dragons dead. I think it's to stop the dragons from getting together at a gathering Amanthus set for the fall equinox. You've heard of Amanthus, I'm sure—the gold dragon the good Othlorx cater to in the Steamwall."

Tavin confirmed both the existence of Amanthus and the call for a secret conclave. Gabus insisted that Amanthus be warned about the plot to kill the dragons and summoned a team of copper dragons to carry the adventurers to Amanthus's lair in the Steamwall.

Amanthus, an ancient gold dragon, had decided to summon the good Othlorx to a conclave in hopes of persuading them to help defend against the evil dragons. But in recent weeks, Amanthus had become increasingly concerned that the forces of evil had learned of his plan to rally the dragons and were plotting to interfere.

Amanthus listened closely to the report from the adventurers. It seemed to confirm his worst fears. Impressed by their skills and courage in defeating Anishta and her aides, Amanthus requested their help again, this time to discover the identity and motive of the mysterious master of the dragon killers.

PROLOGUE: TRILON

GETTING STARTED

If the PCs participated in the previous adventure, *Dragon Dawn,* begin this adventure with the "Introduction for Continuing Players" section; you can also begin with this section if the party is a mixture of new and returning PCs. If the PCs didn't participate in the previous adventure, begin with the "Introduction for New Players" section.

INTRODUCTION FOR NEW PLAYERS

The adventure begins in the wilds of Highvale in Southern Hosk. The party is a group of friends who are natives of the same village and who have worked together in the past. They are on their way to the city of Vinlans to rendezvous with another group of friends who recently undertook a mission from Baron Althen of Rathwyck to hunt down some troublesome poachers. The PCs agreed to bring supplies to their friends and offer their services if necessary.

> The sun is bright and the wind is warm, making the journey to Vinlans particularly pleasant. Still, the day has been a long one, and your bones are beginning to ache—a soft bed in a fine Vinlans inn sounds like paradise.
>
> As you round a bend that turns into a broad meadow of colorful wild flowers, your thoughts are interrupted by the thunder of heavy wings flapping high overhead. Four immense copper dragons descend from the clouds, their leathery wings beating majestically as they float to a soft landing before you. A rugged human warrior rides the lead dragon. A young woman sits behind him, her arms locked around his waist.
>
> The warrior dismounts, beckoning for you to stop. With urgency in his voice, the warrior addresses each of you by name. "I have been sent by your friends," he says. "A matter of extreme emergency demands your attention."

The warrior is Tavin Longspear, a noble dragon knight who serves as protector and confidant of the dragons in this region of Taladas. A rugged human of middle years, he is tall and slim with sandy brown hair and a tanned face. He is suspicious of strangers, but open and friendly with those who share his respect for dragons. (See the Appendix for more information about dragon knights.)

The young woman is Derry Althen, the daughter of Baron Leonid Althen of the Rathwyck Marches. Derry is about 15 years old, with a slim figure and sparkling eyes. She is outgoing, optimistic, and ambitious. She hopes someday to distinguish herself and gain her father's recognition. To that end, she is training to be a dragon knight.

Tavin's mount is Gabus, a bold and blunt-spoken young adult copper dragon. Normally, Gabus is even-tempered, but he can be capricious and impulsive at times. Though he distrusts most humans, Gabus is unwaveringly loyal to Tavin and abides by his judgment. The three riderless young copper dragons are companions of Gabus.

Tavin Longspear (6th-level human dragon knight)
AC 5; MV 12; hp 36; THAC0 15; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon; Str 15, Dex 9, Con 12, Int 12, Wis 13, Cha 17; SA no penalty due to flight when using crossbow or lance from dragon-back; SD immune to dragon awe and dragon fear; AL N

Weapon proficiencies: medium lance (specialized), spear, heavy crossbow (specialized: ½)

Nonweapon proficiencies: dragon riding (13), hunting (12), animal lore (12), fire-building (12), mountaineering, weather sense (12)

Languages: Auric, Copper Dragon (12), Hoor (12)

Equipment: *studded leather +2,* leather helm, *medium lance +1,* heavy crossbow, dagger, five *crossbow bolts +1,* 24 normal crossbow bolts, *potion of dragon sight* (gives user three times his normal range of vision and can see as well as a dragon at night, comparable to infravision with twice normal range; while affected by this potion, the user suffers no penalties for long-distance attacks with missile weapons; effects last 1d4 hours)

Derry Allen (1st-level human fighter)
AC 7; MV 12; Wa1; hp 7; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon; Str 7, Dex 15, Con 9, Int 14, Wis 12, Cha 16; AL NG

Weapon proficiencies: sling, light crossbow, staff

Nonweapon proficiencies: animal lore (14), horsemanship (15), hunting (11), tracking (12)

Languages: Auric, Kothian (14), Hoor (14)

Equipment: ring mail, sling, 24 *bullets +1, potion of animal control* (affecting mammals and avians)

Gabus (young adult copper dragon)
AC –2; MV 9, Fl 30 (C), Jp 3; HD 13; hp 78; THAC0 7; #AT 3 + specials (snatch up to L size; kick 1d6 + 5 feet, and 1d6 + 5 points of damage; wing buffet 1d6 + 5 points of damage); Dmg 1d6 + 5/1d6 + 5/5d4 + 5; SA acid breath (70' long x 5' x 5', Dmg 10d6 + 5, save for half damage), gas breath that slows victim for 15 minutes (30' long x 20' x 20'), can breathe once every three rounds; SD *fear aura* within 15 yards (save vs. petrification or fight at –2 to hit and damage); *spider climb* (on stone), *neutralize poison* (three times per day), *stone shape* (two times per day), immune to acid; MR 10%; AL CG; Size G (45' body, 35' tail)

Spells (cast at 12th level): 1st Level— *detect magic;* 3rd Level— *flame arrow*

Nonweapon proficiencies: ancient history (16), appraising (14)

Languages: Copper Dragon, Auric (14), Marak Kender (14), Bronze Dragon (14), Boli Gnomish (14)

Young bronze dragons (3): AC 0; MV 9, Fl 30 (C), Jp 3; HD 11; hp 63 each; THAC0 9; #AT 3 + special; Dmg 1d6 + 3/1d6 + 3/5d4 + 3; SA acid breath (70' long x 5' x 5', Dmg 10d6 + 3, save for half damage), gas breath that slows victim for nine minutes (30' long x 20' x 20'), can breathe once every three rounds; SD *spider climb* (on stone), *neutralize poison* (three times per day), *stone shape* (two times per day), immune to acid; AL CG; Size G (25' body, 17' tail)

Languages: Copper Dragon, Auric (14), Bronze Dragon (14)



Derry's eyes widen as she approaches you. "This is really an honor," she says. "I've never met warriors such as you before." She points to a PC's sword (or other weapon, if the PCs don't have any swords). "That's the fanciest sword I've ever seen. Is it really yours? Have you ever used it in combat? Did you ever. . . ."

"That's enough, Derry," says Tavin.

"Sorry," says Derry, embarrassed.

"Please forgive her," says Tavin to the PCs. "She has yet to learn her manners." Tavin introduces himself and Derry, then tells Derry to tend to the dragons. Derry grumbles, but does as she's told. Tavin turns his attention to you.

Clearly troubled, Tavin tells the party that their friends managed to track down Anishta and her dragon hunters, but discovered more than they bargained for in the process. "But I'm getting ahead of myself," he says. "Let me start from the beginning." (Tavin relates the story of Baron Althen's mission, the confrontation with the dragon hunters at the Pillars of the Moon, and the revelation of Anishta about the plot to prevent the gathering of the Othlorx; paraphrase for the players all of the relevant information in the DM's Background in the Introduction.)

"It's absolutely vital that Amanthus is warned of the plot against the good Othlorx and prevent his secret conclave," says Tavin. "Amanthus makes his lair on Cloud Mesa in the Steamwall. Since attempts have already been made against his life, his aides are likely to attack all who enter his territory, regardless of their purpose." For that reason, continues Tavin, he is unable to make the journey alone.

"Your friends fought valiantly at the Pillars of the Moon, but they suffered greatly. Their wounds left them too weak to accompany me. However, they told me a group of trusted friends were on their way to rendezvous with them at Vinlans. They asked me to intercept you and request that you take their place in this crucial mission."

Tavin presents the PCs with a document signed by their friends, verifying Tavin's story. The PCs recognize the handwriting. "I assure you that your friends are receiving the best of care. However, I fear they will be bedridden for several months." Tavin asks the PCs if they are willing to take their friends' places and accompany him to Cloud Mesa. (If the PCs decline, or don't trust Tavin, see the "Troubleshooting" section at the end of this section.)

If the PCs agree to help Tavin, he thanks them, then makes sure that they know all the details of the story in case it's necessary to convince Amanthus of the urgency of the situation. (Review the information in the DM's Background in the Introduction with the players.) "We have little time to lose," says Tavin. "Take your mounts!" Each of the young copper dragons is fitted with a special saddle capable of seating two PCs comfortably. The dragons kneel to allow easy access to the saddles.

Approach to Cloud Mesa

After the PCs are astride their mounts, the dragons soar east toward the Steamwall Mountains. Tavin and Derry, riding Gabus, lead the way. The young copper dragons fly carefully, so as to make the journey for their untrained riders as smooth as possible. In a few hours, they reach Cloud Mesa, a towering peak surrounded in a veil of mist.

As Tavin suspected, Amanthus's aides have been alerted to the approach of intruders. Three bronze dragons swoop from the clouds to intercept Gabus. The bronze dragons warn Gabus to turn back or land, but Gabus ignores them and forges ahead toward the mesa. He calls back to the PCs. "Your mounts will set you down. We'll keep these pests occupied, or you'll never get to Amanthus!" The copper dragons drop the PCs off near a cave opening. "Hurry!" shouts Gabus, while he and his fellow copper dragons confront the bronze dragons to cover the PCs' advance. As screeching dragons clash overhead, the PCs can enter the cave.

Meeting With Amanthus

Amanthus relies on his guards and his own abilities to protect him from enemies; hence, his lair is easy to enter. Once the PCs pass through the entrance, a magic mouth cries in a booming voice, "Uninvited!" The sound alerts Amanthus to the presence of intruders.

The entrance opens to a broad passage that winds deep into the mountain, ending in a spacious chamber with a marble floor and walls decorated with intricate mosaics. Against the far wall is a golden throne with rich silken draperies hanging behind it. An elderly, white-haired human dressed in doublet and hose sits in the throne, gazing calmly at the PCs. This is Amanthus in his human form.

"Come forward," he says. "Your ease at evading my guards is most surprising. And most impressive. Your desire for an audience must be great indeed."

Amanthus is not concerned with the party's sudden appearance, as he cast *know alignment* and *ESP* to determine their intentions before they entered his chamber. He regards them with mild indifference until they tell him why they've come. From then on, they have his undivided attention.

As soon as he realizes why they've come, he summons a bronze dragon aide to call off the bronze dragon attack against the copper dragons. He then questions the PCs closely for all information about the plot to stop his impending conclave. When the PCs have told him all they know, he settles back in his throne, lost in thought. After a few moments of silence, he addresses the party.

"I had no idea that there was an organized effort to kill us," he says. "I had heard rumors, but dismissed them as exaggerations. Apparently, I was wrong.

"I am deeply disturbed by the murders, but I am even more concerned about the person behind them and his motive. Who could possibly have found out about our conclave? And who is powerful enough and determined enough to undertake this foul campaign against an entire race?" Amanthus says he dares not risk further involvement of the good Othlorx until he learns more about their enemy. "We need to find out who desires our deaths so badly that he's willing to spend a fortune to accomplish it. Will you undertake this mission for me? If you agree, you will not only be rewarded, you will also have the gratitude of the good Othlorx and myself."

Assuming the PCs agree (see the "Troubleshooting" section at the end of the Prologue if they don't), Amanthus asks how much reward they require if they successfully complete their mission. Amanthus agrees to any reasonable sum (the DM can veto any excessive sum; a total of 20,000 stl in coins and jewels to be split among the party is a good upper limit).

After they have reached an agreement, Amanthus summons three bronze dragon aides to take the PCs to Trilon, the nearest human village. Amanthus says that Trilon is as good a place as any to begin their investigation. He says he will inform Tavin of their arrangement. "If I learn anything else," he adds, "I'll find a way to get the information to you. Good luck."

Continue with the "In Trilon" section.

Amanthus (venerable gold dragon)
AC –10; MV 12, Fl 40 (C), jp 3, Sw 12 (15 when in wingless form); HD 22; hp 140; THAC0 5; #AT 3 + specials (snatch up to three L size; kick 1d6 + 10 feet, and 1d10 + 10 points of dmg; wing buffet 1d10 + 10 points of dmg; tail slap up to six creatures for 2d10 + 20 points of dmg, victims must save vs. petrification or be stunned for 1d4 + 1 minutes); Dmg 1d10 + 10/1d10 + 10/6d6 + 10; SA cone of fire (90' long x 5' x 30', Dmg 20d12 + 10, save for half damage), chlorine gas cloud (50' long x 40' x 30', Dmg 20d12 + 10, save for half damage), can breathe once every three rounds; SD *fear aura* within 40 yards (save vs. petrification or fight with –2 penalty to attack and damage rolls); *water breathing* and *speak with animals* at will; immune to fire and gas; *polymorph self, bless, detect lie,* and *detect gems* (know the number and type of precious stones within 30' radius), all three times per day; *animal summoning* and *luck bonus* (enchant a gem to bestow +1 bonus to all saving throws and similar dice rolls to all good creatures within 10' radius; enchantment lasts 1d3 + 30 hours), each once per day; MR 60%; AL LG; Size G (125' body, 110' tail)

Spells (cast at 21st level): 1st Level— *comprehend languages, detect magic, light, protection from evil;* 2nd Level— *ESP, know alignment, produce flame, silence 15' radius;* 3rd Level— *fireball, flame arrow;* 4th Level— *dimension door, fire shield;* 5th Level— *teleport, cloudkill;* 6th Level— *disintegrate, move earth*

Nonweapon proficiencies: ancient history (17), astrology (18), religion (18)

Languages: Gold Dragon, Copper Dragon (18), Auric (18), Marak Kender (18), Silver Dragon (18), Hoor (18), Bronze Dragon (18), Hitehkel Gnomish (18)

Introduction for Continuing Players

The adventure begins immediately after the events of Chapter 6 in the previous adventure, *Dragon Dawn.* Following the PCs' meeting with Amanthus, they have spent several days in Trilon, resting and resupplying for the mission ahead. If the party is a mixture of new and returning PCs, assume that the new PCs have rendezvoused with the party in Trilon at the request of the returning PCs (the new PCs are replacements for the party's fallen comrades). The returning PCs have brought the new PCs up to date as to their experiences so far. (The DM should provide the new players with all of the information in the DM's Background in the Introduction.)

Continue with the "In Trilon" section.

In Trilon

The PCs spend about a week in Trilon, a small but friendly village occupied by several bronze dragon knights. If the PCs speak with the knights, the knights listen with interest to their story about Amanthus; they are clearly concerned, but they have no useful information about who—or what—might be behind the dragon killings.

If the PCs ask about Tavin, the knights confirm that he is a trustworthy and courageous warrior. "Tavin's word is his bond," say the knights. "Anything he says, you can accept as the truth."

Although the rest of the villagers are friendly, they have little useful information. Rumors abound concerning roving bands of dragon hunters, but no one has any hard evidence. "The lands surrounding Trilon are among the most barren in all of Taladas," says a wise old shopkeeper who takes a liking to the PCs. "If I were a dragon, this would be the last place I'd make my lair. And if I were a dragon hunter, you can bet I'd be hunting anyplace but here."

Trilon has a fairly active business community. Assume that all of the items on the equipment lists (pages 66-69 of the 2nd Edition *Player's Handbook)* with a price of 400 gp or less are for sale here. (Don't forget to convert the prices to steel.) There are no potions or any other magical items for sale in Trilon.

Message From a Friend

After the PCs have spent a night or two in Trilon, they are awakened by a soft knock on their door a few minutes after they've gone to bed. The knock comes from the innkeeper. "I'm very sorry to disturb you," he says. "But I was asked to give you this message. I was told it couldn't wait until morning." The innkeeper hands over a sealed parchment scroll. If asked, the innkeeper says it was delivered just a few minutes ago by a small boy who said it was left at his window by a dragon. "But you know how active a young boy's imagination can be," says the innkeeper. He apologizes again, wishes the PCs a restful evening, then closes the door behind him. (If the PCs wish to speak with the boy, the innkeeper can take the PCs to him. The boy swears that a huge copper dragon clawed at his window, gave him the scroll, and told him to have the innkeeper deliver it to the occupants in the northwestern corner room on the second floor; this is where the party's room is located.)

The message on the parchment reads: "IMPORTANT INFORMATION REGARDING OUR PLAN. MEET ME AT MIDNIGHT. TAVIN." Scrawled at the bottom of the parchment is a map showing a path from the party's inn to a secluded valley about three miles north of town.

Valley Meeting

Assuming the PCs respond to the message as requested (if they don't, see the "Troubleshooting" section at the end of the Prologue), they find Tavin waiting for them in the area indicated on the map. Gabus is also with him, concealed in a grove of trees. (If the PCs ask about Derry, Tavin tells them that she's on a training mission in the forests of Highvale.)

"I have good news," Tavin says excitedly. "I believe we have a way to discover the identity of the master of the dragon-killers." Tavin explains that two days ago, he and some fellow dragon knights intercepted a band of thugs on their way east. These weren't just any ordinary thugs, "but six of the most disreputable mercenaries in all of the Minotaur Leagues." The knights questioned the thugs, and discovered they were on their way to a meeting in Gridmire, a small village in the southern Steamwall region. "And who was the meeting with? None other than Gezele Ella herself!"

All About Ella

All of the PCs are familiar with the name of the notorious Gezele Ella. Popularly known as "Big Ella," her criminal career is legendary. Unmatched in her ruthlessness and cunning, she was responsible for a series of the most spectacular crimes ever committed in Taladas. However, the PCs were under the impression that Big Ella was captured and executed several years ago.

"We thought we were rid of her," says Tavin, "but we were wrong." He explains that about five years ago, Ella was cap-

tured in Kristophan and charged with poisoning the horses belonging to the New City livestock dealers. "Ella planned to corner the market in horse trade by eliminating all of the competition," says Tavin. "Eight hundred horses died before she was caught."

Ella was scheduled to be executed, but she reportedly died in jail before her sentence could be carried out. "However, the mercenaries we captured revealed that Ella bribed her guards and escaped. The Kristophan authorities conducted a search but were unable to find her. To avoid embarrassment, the authorities manufactured the story of Ella's death."

Ella kept a low profile for the next few years, committing only small crimes so as not to attract attention. A few months ago, however, she was contacted by a mysterious individual who was aware of her past. "Apparently, this individual was extremely impressed with her background and hired her as a dragon hunter." The knights believe that Ella alone has been responsible for the slaughter of more than 50 dragons. As for her employer, "We have reason to believe that he is none other than the master of the dragon killers; of all the dragon hunters operating in Taladas, Ella is the only one we know of who has had direct contact with the master. She alone knows who he is and from where he operates."

According to Tavin, the captured mercenaries were on their way to Gridmire for an interview with Ella. "Apparently, Ella has been assigned an important job by the master of the dragon-hunters. Ordinarily, Ella works alone, but this job is so tough that she decided to recruit some help. Word went out that a big-time operator was looking for hired guns in Gridmire." The mercenaries captured by Tavin and his friends were among the would-be recruits.

Tavin's Plan

Tavin says that this situation presents them with a remarkable opportunity. "Please bear with me while I explain this to you. I'm sure you'll have questions, and I promise to answer them all," he tells the PCs. "What I suggest is that you show up in Gridmire and pass yourselves off as mercenaries. If you can suitably impress Ella, she'll take you on as hired hands. And if you help her complete her assignment, there's a good chance that she'll take you along when she reports to her master."

"Obviously, there are a lot of risks involved," continues Tavin. "If you're exposed as impostors, there's no telling how Ella will react. At best, you'll scare her off and we'll never learn her employer's identity. At worst . . . well, I doubt if she'll let you live."

Tavin adds that since Ella is a wanted criminal, the PCs may be mistaken for criminals themselves if they're not careful. "We can't risk letting any of the Taladan authorities know of our plans. We can't be sure who to trust. So if you're captured, the authorities are likely to prosecute you as Ella's accomplices."

Tavin says that the mercenaries are scheduled to meet with Ella at the Snake's Grin Inn in Gridmire at eleven o'clock tomorrow night. If the PCs manage to ingratiate themselves with Ella and find out the identity and the motive of the master of the dragon-killers, Tavin says that he or a fellow dragon knight will find a way to contact them. "But until that time, I'm afraid you'll be on your own."

Questioning Tavin

At this point, Tavin asks the PCs if they have any questions. He answers as described below. (If the PCs don't ask the right questions, Tavin offers any of the following information that the DM feels the PCs should have.)

Can we question the mercenaries you captured? The knights turned the mercenaries over to the Kristophan authorities. Currently, the mercenaries are being extradited to cities throughout Taladas for prosecution. To track them down now could take days. Tavin assures the PCs that the Knights learned everything they could from them.

Will Ella be alone? Rumor has it that Ella has been traveling in the company of an evil goblin shaman who serves as her religious advisor. Tavin has no details about the goblin, "but I think it's safe to assume that he's as bad as she is."

Will she be interviewing anyone other than us? In spite of the potential rewards, Tavin doubts that many mercenaries are eager to work with Ella. "Ella has a reputation as a vicious boss. She routinely executes underlings who don't measure up."

Won't Ella be expecting the mercenaries you captured? Won't she recognize us as impostors? "Ella spread the word about the interview through intermediaries. She didn't invite anyone in particular, so she doesn't know who to expect!'

Is there anything we can do that might help persuade her to hire us? "Ella trusts her own instincts. There's no telling how she'll make her decision, so you'll have to play it by ear." However, Tavin adds that Ella enjoys a good story. "She might ask you about your credentials. Make them good. She'll probably expect you to exaggerate, so don't disappoint her."

Is there anyone we can contact for help in case we get in trouble? "It's fairly desolate country around Gridmire. You're not likely to find any allies." He knows of no dragon knights in the Gridmire area, "but even if I did, we shouldn't risk making Ella suspicious. I'm afraid you'll be on your own."

Can you help us? Tavin has pressing business elsewhere in Taladas, so he won't be available to help them either. (If the PCs ask about Derry, Tavin tells them that her training mission will keep her occupied for the next several weeks. "Besides, she's far too young and inexperienced.")

What if we capture her ourselves and turn her over to the authorities? "Then we'll never find out about the master of the dragon-killers. And remember that the authorities may decide to prosecute you for associating with a wanted criminal, regardless of whether you're the ones who turn her in."

Couldn't we just read her mind and find out the name of the master of the dragon-killers? (This may be a relevant question if one or more of the PCs has access to *ESP* or similar magic.) One of the reasons that Ella has been so elusive over the years, explains Tavin, is because of her remarkable mental powers. "She is completely resistant to *ESP* or mental probes of any kind. Her will is so powerful, it is believed that even in death she would resist a *speak with dead* spell." (Tavin is correct.) "No one is certain how her mind became so strong, although there are rumors that she extorted the secrets of mind control from an elven wizard some years ago." (The rumors are correct—see the "Selected NPCs" section of the Appendix for more about Big Ella's background.) In any case, says Tavin, attempts at probing Ella's mind for the information are bound to be futile. Further, he adds, intimidation, threats, or physical violence are unlikely to force Ella to reveal information she'd rather conceal. "Ella would prefer death, I'm sure." (He's right.)

What if we have to kill dragons in order to help Ella complete her mission? Tavin is clearly troubled by this question. "I'm not sure how to advise you," he says at last. "Unfortunately, we have no idea exactly what mission Ella has agreed to perform. The dragon knights have no special relationship with the evil dragons. As far as we're concerned, they're better off dead. Yet, it's likely that Ella will be hunting good or neutral dragons, and we have devoted our lives to their protection. I cannot in good conscience advise you to destroy an



innocent creature. You will have to be guided by your own principles." (As will be seen in subsequent chapters, the PCs probably won't be required to compromise their principles.)

Preparations

Assuming the PCs agree to the plan (if they don't, see the "Troubleshooting" section), Tavin thanks them for their courage. He says they should return to their inn, get a good night's rest, then return here just after sunset tomorrow evening. Tavin will arrange for some copper dragon friends of Gabus to give them a ride to the outskirts of Gridmire. The PCs may suggest that they ride their own mounts to Gridmire. Tavin discourages this. "It may take too long. And there's always the chance you'll be ambushed by monsters or bandits." (If the PCs insist on riding their horses or other mounts, Tavin reluctantly agrees. Adjust the following "Departure" section accordingly; the trip to Gridmire is uneventful.)

Before they depart, Tavin gives them three gifts that he says might help them on their mission:

- The withered ear of a copper dragon. Tavin, who handles the severed ear with distaste, says it was taken from the intercepted mercenaries. "This should help you convince Ella that you are indeed dragon hunters."
- A flask containing four doses of *potion of dragon language.* The potions enable the user to speak and understand the languages of all good and neutral dragons. The effects last for 1d4 hours.
- A *belt of protection from electricity.* Tavin says a friendly wizard developed the belt as a defense against the lightning breath weapon of blue dragons, but it didn't work. However, the belt provides the wearer with complete immunity to all forms of natural electricity, such as lightning bolts and the charge of an electric eel (it is ineffective against *lightning bolt* and similar spells).

Departure

When the PCs return to the field the following evening, they find Tavin, Gabus, and three copper dragons waiting for them. Tavin says the dragons will drop them off a few miles west of Gridmire. From there, they can proceed to the village on foot.

Tavin wishes the PCs good luck as they mount the dragons. When all of the PCs are comfortably seated, the dragons take to the sky and soar east toward Gridmire.

Proceed to Chapter 1.

Troubleshooting

If the PCs don't respond to the message delivered by the innkeeper. Suspicious PCs might not believe that the message from Tavin is authentic. In that case, Gabus might appear at their window and deliver the message in person.

If the PCs don't accept the mission from Tavin. If the PCs are reluctant to accept the mission, aren't convinced that Tavin is telling the truth, or require additional motivation for any other reason, Tavin produces an object resembling a glass apple from his pocket. The object is an *apple of revelation,* a magical family heirloom that reveals images of a possible future when polished. Tavin polishes the apple and reveals a devastated Taladas, overrun with evil dragons and other minions of darkness, a result of failing to stop the master of the dragon-killers. (If new PCs are reluctant to accept the mission from Amanthus, it's possible that the gold dragon has a similar device in his lair to show them the consequences of their refusal.)

CHAPTER I: GRIDMIRE

This chapter begins immediately after the events in the Prologue. Tavin's copper dragons drop the PCs off in a secluded clearing about five miles west of Gridmire, then vanish into the sky.

INTO THE VILLAGE

With fewer than 350 residents, Gridmire is a grim and dismal place, serving mainly as a haven for low-lifes. The village is a collection of single-storey buildings with crumbling stone walls and thatched roofs in desperate need of repair. Except for a few seedy-looking derelicts and an occasional beggar, the streets are deserted. If the PCs approach any of the derelicts, they stumble away as fast as they can, ignoring whatever the PCs have to say.

At the DM's discretion, the PCs may experience one or both of the following encounters within their first hour in Gridmire.

DRUNKEN BEGGAR

A drunken beggar staggers up to the PCs, asking for food, money, or anything else they can spare.

Beggar (human male): AC 10; MV 12; F1; hp 3; THAC0 20; #AT nil (no weapons, too drunk to fight with his fists); AL N

If the PCs give anything to the beggar, he thanks them, then happily totters away. If they decline, he swears at them, then stumbles into the shadows of an alley.

If the PCs ask for information, the beggar offers to help them if they give him a coin. If they give him the coin, the beggar attempts to run away. If the PCs chase him down, he gives back their money and pleads for mercy.

DISTRESSED DAMSEL

As the PCs make their way down a dark street, a young woman dressed in tattered peasant's clothes races out of an alley. "Help me, please!" she gasps to the party, tears streaming down her cheeks. "It's my brother! He's been beaten by muggers! I think he's dying!"

Damsel (human female): AC 10; MV 12; F1; hp 2; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4 (dagger); AL LE

The woman is lying; she doesn't have a brother. She's trying to lure the party into the alley where they'll be attacked by her cohorts. If the party presses for information, the woman says, "There's no time for talk—he's dying! Please hurry!" If the PCs become suspicious and decline to help her, she runs back into the alley to wait for another victim to pass by.

If the PCs agree to help her, she leads them into a dark alley about 30 feet wide, bordered on either side by a row of single-storey buildings. The alley is a dead end; the end of the alley is filled with broken crates and other refuse. "He's back there," she says, pointing to the refuse.

Four muggers are waiting on the roofs of the buildings, two on either side of the alley. As soon as any PC comes within ten feet of the refuse, the muggers attack.

Muggers (four human males): AC 10; MV 12; F2; hp 7 each; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 (club); AL LE

The muggers descend from the roofs by ropes, a process taking one round. They attack the PCs with clubs, intending to kill them, then rob them. The damsel joins the attack, using her dagger against the nearest PC.

The muggers aren't particularly courageous. Any mugger who loses half his hit points attempts to flee; the damsel also flees if she loses half her hit points. If three of the five flee, the other two also give up and run. The muggers have no useful information.

SNAKE'S GRIN INN

The Snake's Grin Inn is the largest building in the village, marked with a sign bearing a crude painting of a smiling serpent smoking a cigar.

The only customers are a group of six seated at a table in a dark corner at the far end of the room. They include a fat man in plate mail wearing a black eye patch, a dark-haired female half-elf, a barbarian with a shaved head and a single long braid dangling down his back, a fair-haired warrior in banded mail, a bull minotaur, and a lanky humanoid lizard.

The seated rowdies stare at the PCs. They silently size the PCs up, then resume their noisy conversation.

The barmaid avoids eye contact with the PCs. If they attempt conversation with her, she interrupts them with a sharp "Leave me alone! I don't want anything to do with any of you!" If the PCs approach the table, the fat man and his companions ignore them. If the PCs don't take the hint and leave them alone, or if the PCs become belligerent, the fat man warns them to mind their own business. (If the PCs start a fight, see the "Troubleshooting" section.)

If the PCs take a table within ten feet of the fat man and his friends, the fat man snarls at them to move away. If the PCs take a table anywhere else in the inn, they can wait in peace for the arrival of Big Ella at eleven o'clock.

THE HOSK MERCENARIES

Following are descriptions, personality notes, and statistics for the Hosk mercenaries. (The fat man and his companions all come from Northern and Southern Hosk. The group members don't refer to themselves as the Hosk mercenaries; rather, it's used as a convenience for the DM.)

THE INTERVIEW

Precisely at eleven o'clock, the door to the inn swings open, revealing an enormous human female with a diminutive humanoid at her side. The female is over seven feet tall and nearly as broad as the doorway. Long gray hair frames her beefy face, dangling in thick curls around her shoulders. She wears a bulky cloak that appears to be made of dragon scales of various colors and carries a huge club studded with steel needles. A silver pendant hangs from her neck, molded in the shape of a bony claw. Her companion is a male goblin, barely three feet tall. He has deep red skin, tiny yellow eyes, and a flat face with pointed ears and a wide mouth. He wears

Sanch Garrax (4th-level human fighter)
AC 3; MV 12; hp 21; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon; Str 16, Dex 10, Con 13; Int 15, Wis 12, Cha 14; AL LE

Weapon Proficiencies: long bow (specialized), dagger, knife, battle axe

Nonweapon Proficiencies: blind-fighting, rope use (10) running (7)

Languages: Auric, Kothian (14), Draconian (14)

Equipment: plate mail, long bow, 20 normal arrows, *dagger +1,* knife, battle axe

Sanch Garrax is the leader of the Hosk mercenaries. He has a huge stomach, stubby beard, and bulbous nose. He wears tarnished plate mail and has a black eye patch over his right eye.

Sanch controls the mercenaries through threats and intimidation. The others tolerate Sanch's abuse because he has an uncanny knack for sniffing out lucrative jobs. He has no close friends among the mercenaries, though Brutax and Cha't Irs respect his strength. Sanch lusts after Shedra, who finds him thoroughly repulsive. Hol despises him. Zaz fears him.

Hol Horth (3rd-level human fighter)
AC 8; MV 12; hp 19; THAC0 18; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon; Str 10, Dex 15, Con 11, Int 6, Wis 5, Cha 17; AL LE

Weapon Proficiencies: dagger (specialized), knife, trident, mace

Nonweapon Proficiencies: endurance (11), swimming (10), weather sense (4)

Languages: Auric

Equipment: padded armor, dagger, mace, *potion of animal control (fish), potion of water breathing*

With his thick blonde hair, crystal blue eyes, and sharply chiseled features, Hol Horth is strikingly handsome. He is also lazy and doltish. Lacking the discipline and common sense to master a career, he turned to crime to support himself. Though he hates Sanch for lusting after his beloved Shedra, he is totally dependent on Sanch's leadership, as he is unable to devise criminal schemes of his own.

With the exception of Brutax and Zaz, whom he regards as filthy animals, Hol feels inferior to all of the other mercenaries. He adores Shedra and counts on her to help him make decisions.

Shedra (4th-level elf wizard [Elf Clan wizardess, enchantment specialist])
AC 10; MV 12; hp 11; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon or spell; Str 7, Dex 10, Con 8, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 16; SA victims suffer a –1 penalty when rolling saving throws against enchantment spells cast by Shedra; SD +1 bonus when rolling saving throws against enchantment spells cast by other wizards; AL NE

Weapon Proficiencies: staff

Nonweapon Proficiencies: ancient history (13), artistic ability (10), dancing (10), singing (16), spellcraft (14)

Languages: Tamire Elf, Ancient Elf (14), Uigan (140, Auric (14)

Equipment: staff, dagger, *gem of* brightness (three charges)

Spells: 1st Level— *feather fall, grease, taunt, ventriloquism;* 2nd Level— *detect invisibility, scare, summon swarm*

Shedra is a Elf Clan wizardess from Tamire who was exiled from her village for using her skills to benefit herself at the expense of her clan. Shedra murdered her chief accuser, then fled from Tamire. She eventually joined the mercenaries, who promised to provide her with protection and a source of income in exchange for her skills.

With flowing black hair, sparkling green eyes, and full red lips, Shedra is acutely aware of her beauty and her effect on the opposite sex. She is conceited, arrogant, and cunning, and has an insatiable appetite for jewelry and steel.

Though she finds Hol Horth shallow and dull, Shedra is attracted to him physically and indulges his romantic advances. She keeps the other mercenaries at arm's length and treats them like children.

Cha't Irs (3rd-level human ranger)
AC 9; MV 12; hp 19; THAC0 18; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon; Str 13, Dex 15, Con 14, Int 12, Wis 14, Cha 9; SA +4 bonus to attack rolls when attacking minotaurs (species enemy); SD hide in shadows 20%, move silently 27%; AL NE

Weapon Proficiencies: battle axe (specialized), blowgun, dagger

Nonweapon Proficiencies: direction sense (15), firebuilding (13), survival (12)

Languages: Panka, Auric (12), Kothian (12)

Equipment: battle axe with serrated edges (Dmg 1d8 + 2), blowgun (shoots needles treated with special poison; struck victims suffer 1 point of damage and must roll a successful saving throw vs. poison or are sluggish and dizzy for the following 2d4 rounds, during which time the victim suffers a –2 penalty to all attack rolls), dagger, *ring of water walking*

Cha't comes from a primitive village in the wilderness of Northern Hosk. Two years ago, his village was assaulted by a band of minotaur marauders. Cha't managed to escape, but the rest of the villagers were killed. The experience left Cha't bitter and vengeful, and he eventually turned to a life of crime.

In the tradition of his people, Cha't shuns armor. He shaves his head bald, except for a single braid of brown hair that dangles down his back. He has narrow, yellow eyes, dark brown skin, and a bushy moustache. He is soft-spoken and trusts no one, including the other mercenaries. He has no particular allegiance to his comrades, and he would betray them without hesitation if doing so would benefit himself.

He has grudging respect for Sanch, but finds Zaz repulsive, Hol boorish and stupid, and Shedra snotty and cold. He suppresses his natural hatred of Brutax only with difficulty, and he has often thought of slitting the beast's throat while it sleeps.

Brutax (2nd-level minotaur fighter)
AC 6; MV 12; hp 18; THAC0 19; #AT 2; Dmg 2d4/1d4 (horns and bite) or by weapon; Str 17, Dex 5, Con 14, Int 6, Wis 4, Cha 6; SD +1 bonus to all surprise rolls, immune to *maze* spells; AL LE

Weapon Proficiencies: sling (specialized), short sword, mace

Nonweapon Proficiencies: Endurance (14), Hunting (3), Set Snares (5)

Languages: Kothian

Equipment: sling, 20 sling bullets, mace

Originally trained as a minotaur champion in the Minotaur League, Brutax lacked both the imagination to be an effective fighter and the ambition to master any other career. Banished from the League arenas, Brutax eventually drifted into crime.

Brutax is simple-minded, affable, and lazy. His love of combat is exceeded only by his love of strong drink. Seemingly oblivious to his surroundings, he is unaware of the contempt his companions feel towards him; as far as Brutax is concerned, the other mercenaries are his trusted and loyal friends. He admires Sanch, is fond of Hol, and envies the abilities of Shedra. He is intimidated by Zaz and a little frightened of Cha't.

Zaz (Traag draconian)
AC 4; MV 6; HD 3; hp 19; THAC0 17; #AT 2 or 1; Dmg 1d6/1d6 (claws) or by weapon; Str 13, Dex 6, Con 10, Int 5, Wis 5, Cha 4; SD immune to *dragon's fear* ability, gains a +1 bonus to all saving throws vs. spells that cause fear *(scare, fear,* etc.) once combat begins; when Zaz creature dies, he bubbles and rots away in a single round, leaving behind only a puddle of slime; AL CE

Languages: all draconian tongues

Equipment: spear

Zaz is a Traag draconian whose tribe was destroyed by a fever plague. Because of his natural immunity, Zaz was the only member of his tribe who survived the plague. Zaz spent months aimlessly roaming the countryside until he met Sanch, who offered him a position with the mercenaries. Though Zaz normally avoided associating with other races, he had no better option and agreed to join Sanch.

Like all Traag draconians, Zaz is cautious by nature. He avoids combat unless the odds are in his favor; however, once engaged in battle, he fights savagely and fearlessly. Zaz prefers to use his claws when attacking. (See the *Rule Book to Taladas* in the *Time of the Dragon* set or the fourth volume of the *Monstrous Compendium* for more information about Traag draconians.)

Zaz is easily the most despised of the mercenaries. None of his companions can stand to associate with him, and Zaz is quite aware of their contempt. However, Zaz lacks the courage to make his own way in the world and he needs the security of a group.

a floor-length robe and a narrow headband, both made of black leather. Like the woman, he wears a claw-shaped silver pendant. (The woman is Big Ella. Her goblin companion is Grott. See the Appendix for their statistics and background information.)

Ella looks over the PCs and mercenaries, then turns to Grott. "Two groups," she says. "Just as Angomeith prophesied." "Yes ma'am," says Grott, his voice shrill and squeaking. "Praise be to Angomeith." Ella takes a table between the PCs and the mercenaries. If any PC speaks to her, she glares at them until they stop. "Let's not waste time," she says. "I'm here to hire dragon hunters. I only want the best. It's dangerous work, but good money."

Ella leans back in her chair. "I'm not in the mood to train amateurs. Who among you has hunted dragons before? If you've got a story, let's hear it. Make it good."

"I'm a dragon hunter," says Sanch. "The best there is. I've tracked dragons from Ilquar to Thenol and back again. I found a pair of coppers in Blackwater one time, and strangled them both while they slept."

"You're lying," says Ella flatly. "But it's a good story. I like a good story. Consider this an advance." She tosses the incredulous Sanch a steel piece. She then produces a small leather bag and shakes it, rattling the coins inside. "Anybody got a better one?" Shedra perks up at the prospect of money, and she rises to her feet.

"A twelve-headed gold dragon once threatened my village," she says, making up her story as she goes along. "With a crystal sword I fashioned myself, I lopped off all twelve heads, which continued to writhe and snap long after they dropped to the ground."

"Incredible!" howls Ella, then turns to the PCs. "Can anybody top that?" Any of the PCs can now attempt to tell a story that illustrates their dragon-fighting prowess. As should be clear by now, the point of the stories is to amuse Ella, not to relate the facts of an actual experience. The first PC to tell a story more interesting than Shedra (in the DM's judgment) earns the sack of coins, which contains 30 stl. A PC who produces Tavin's dragon ear (which was given to the party in the "Preparations" section at the end of the Prologue) and tells even a moderately entertaining story is almost certain to win the contest. If no PC tells a better story than Shedra, then Shedra is the winner.

After Ella has heard all of the stories, she tells them that she will decide tomorrow which group to hire. "I want people who can work together," she says. "I want a team." She says she'll either hire the PCs or the mercenaries; she won't break up a team, nor will she hire both teams. "Too many hunters draw too much attention."

"We'll discuss the details in the morning. The rooms are on me." If the PCs tell Ella they'd rather make their own sleeping arrangements, she snaps, "If you want to work for me, you better start getting used to doing things my way." After consulting with the innkeeper, Ella tells the mercenaries to take a room on the first floor. The PCs will sleep in a room on the second floor. Ella and Grott take a room on the second floor across from the party's room.

Before the PCs and the mercenaries retire, Ella warns them to keep away from each other. (The mercenaries heed the warning and don't leave their room until morning.)

Restless Night

The PCs' room contains six frame beds, a wooden table, and a few chairs. Aside from Ella, Grott, the mercenaries, and the innkeeper (who sleeps on a cot in the bar), there are no other occupants in the inn.

If the PCs bother Ella and Grott (for instance, if they knock on their door to talk with them), Ella barks for them to go away, warning them that they'll be out of the running for the job if they don't leave her alone. If the PCs sneak out of the inn to explore the town, they'll find nothing of interest. If the PCs disregard Ella's warning and bother the mercenaries, see the "Troubleshooting" section.

First Disturbance

About two hours after they retire to their room, the PCs hear the sounds of an argument coming from the room across the hall. The PCs recognize the voices of Ella and Grott, but they cannot make out the words.

However, if the PCs quietly open their door and enter the hallway, they can hear part of what's being said. Ella is demanding that Grott double check some kind of calculations.

Ella: "You must be mistaken!"

Grott: "I'm sorry, ma'am. Angomeith does not lie."

Ella: "Check it again!"

Grott: "Have faith. His wisdom is beyond reproach."

Ella (sheepishly): "You're right, of course. Praise be to Angomeith."

Several minutes of incomprehensible mumbles follow. If the PCs have access to *clairaudience* or a similar spell, they hear Ella and Grott engaged in an unfamiliar prayer ritual, after which Grott asks Ella to "reconsider your decision about Mt. Tamerlin." At this point, they begin to argue again, and the PCs can hear their words clearly.

Ella: "Absolutely not!"

Grott: "Please ma'am! I beg you! We're so close. It couldn't take more than an extra few days!"

Ella: "Your concerns mean nothing compared to our mission."

Grott: "Then please don't take Shedra! At least you can do that!"

Ella: "It is not for us to decide. We will speak no more of this."

Silence follows. Ella and Grott go to sleep, and there are no more words spoken in their room this evening.

Second Disturbance

A few hours after the first disturbance, the PCs hear a soft knock at their door. "It's Grott," says a soft voice. "Let me in. I have information for you." If the PCs ignore Grott or tell him to leave, he does as they wish, and the encounter is over. If they let him in, he nervously closes the door behind him and tells them to keep quiet. "Ella doesn't know I'm here," he whispers. "If she finds out, we're all in trouble." Grott is so nervous, he's shaking. "You've got to beat the others," he says hysterically. "You can't let Ella hire them! You can't! You can't!" The PCs will have to calm him down if they're going to find out what's going on.

Assuming the PCs say a few soothing words, Grott takes a deep breath and explains that he recognized two of the Hoth mercenaries as soon as he entered the bar. "Hol Horth and Shedra," he says. "They're goblin killers. They slaughtered an entire village of goblins in Ilquar just for the sport of it. They'll kill me too as soon as they get a chance."

Grott says that Ella intends to decide which group to employ based on the results of an arena combat. "She's going to put you all in a big cave and let you fight it out," he says. "But the fight isn't going to be a fair one." Grott says that Ella believes the PCs are stronger than the mercenaries. At Ella's request, he did a moon reading (more about this below) that prophesied that the fight would be more fair if the mercenaries had an advantage.

"That's what I've come to warn you about," he says. "Ella intends to let them into the arena earlier than you. They'll have plenty of time to hide and set traps. You've got to be careful." Grott says he has a second reason for contacting the PCs. "My faith requires me to perform an annual ritual at an active volcano. An appropriate volcano, Mt. Tamerlin, is not far from Gridmire, but Ella refuses to go there. She says our mission is more important." "But if Ella employs you," he continues, "then you can find an excuse to take us there." Grott says that if the PCs get him to Mt. Tamerlin, he promises to return the favor. (He won't say how he plans to do this; he doesn't know yet.)

At this point, the PCs may have several questions for Grott. He answers as described below. It's up to the PCs to decide if he's telling the truth. (He is in all cases.) If the PCs don't ask the right questions, Grott won't volunteer any of the information.

What do you know about the arena? "Very little. Ella discovered it herself outside of town and didn't let me see it. All I know is that it consists of several chambers and has two large pools of water."

What's a "moon reading"? Grott is a goblin shaman who's studied the movements of Krynn's moons his entire life. By "reading" the moons, he is able to forecast the future and receive omens. Grott unquestioningly believes in these forecasts and omens, as does Ella. Grott takes a moon reading every night.

Can you fake the moon readings to make them more advantageous for us? Grott is offended at this. "Absolutely not."

Who's Angomeith? Angomeith is the god of the Dark Moon to which both Grott and Ella are utterly devoted. (Any PC who rolls a successful Wisdom check, or any PC with a proficiency in religion, recognizes it as a variant name of Angomais—also known as Nuitari—the evil god of the Dark Moon. The name is used by a handful of obscure goblin cults.)

What makes you think we'll be able to find an excuse to go to Mt. Tamerlin? In Grott's moon reading this evening, he determined that Ella must relinquish all decision-making for the next five weeks to her new employees (either the PCs or the mercenaries). Ella was angry when she heard the results of the reading (this was the topic of the initial argument in the "First Disturbance" section), but she will obey it. "Within reason, she'll abide by all of your decisions. If you decide it's important for us to go to Tamerlin, she'll go along with it!'

What's your mission? Who's employing Ella? Grott doesn't know.

What's your relationship with Ella? Ella saved Grott's life, rescuing him from the jaws of a green dragon. When Grott learned that Ella shared his reverence for Angomeith, he did a moon reading to determine the fate of their relationship. "The reading showed that we should remain partners for the rest of out lives. Which is what we both intend to do."

If necessary, will you help us defeat Ella? Grott takes offense at this. "Absolutely not. I come to you tonight only because I feel my life is at stake. I pray that Angomeith will forgive my transgression."

If we help you get to Mt. Tamerlin, when will you return the favor? "That is up to Angomeith." (Grott will return the favor when the PCs experience the "Old Friends" encounter in Encounter Zone 21 in Chapter 2.)

After the PCs have questioned Grott for about 20 minutes, he says he must return to his room before Ella notices he's gone. "Fight well tomorrow," he says as he leaves. "May Angomeith be with you."

To the Arena

The next morning, the PCs meet Ella, Grott, and the Hosk mercenaries in the bar. Ella tells both groups to follow her. "We're going to the country for a little contest," she says. She tells the PCs to keep 30 yards between themselves and the mercenaries. "If one group bothers the other, they can consider themselves disqualified." (The mercenaries obey this instruction. If the PCs don't, see the "Troubleshooting" section.)

With Grott at her side, Ella leads the groups to a secluded area of rolling hills about five miles out of town. She stops in front of a ten-foot-diameter opening in the side of a hill. She tells them the opening leads to a large cave. "The contest will take place here." (Two evenings ago, Ella and Grott were camping in this area. Ella was up in the middle of the night, scrounging for food, when she discovered the cave.)

Ella explains that the cave is an arena, "where one group will pit their skills against the other." There is a second opening on the other side of the hill, she says. Each group will enter the cave from opposite sides. The two groups will battle each other in the cave; whichever group subdues the most members of the opposing group will be hired by Ella. The losing group will be sent on their way.

The following rules also apply:

- The contest continues until Ella announces that it's over. At that time, all conscious contestants will leave the arena. (As will be seen, the contest will be over before Ella has the chance to end it.)
- If any member of either group retreats from the arena before Ella announces the end of the contest, that group automatically loses.
- Contestants can subdue each other with weapons, with spells, or by other any manner they choose. To be considered subdued, a contestant must be unable to leave the cave under his own power; he must be knocked out, tied up, or otherwise disabled. "An accidental death or two would be unfortunate, but understandable."

If there are no questions from the PCs, Ella takes the mercenaries aside and speaks to them in private. Although the PCs cannot hear what Ella is saying (unless they have access to *clairaudience* or a similar spell), they can see the mercenaries nod their heads and smile broadly. Ella then sends them to the opposite side of the hill.

Once the mercenaries have rounded the hill, Ella asks Grott to give a silent prayer. Grott bows his head and mumbles for 15 minutes (during this time, the mercenaries are entering the cave and concealing themselves in various locations inside—see "The Mercenaries' Strategy" section below). After 15 minutes have passed, Ella and Grott take their place on a plateau overlooking the cave. "You may now enter the arena," Ella shouts to the PCs. "Let the contest begin!"

Staging the Contest

To stage the contest, review the various areas of the arena described in the Encounter Key and the plans of the mercenaries in "The Mercenaries' Strategy" section. Since some combat may occur in the water, a "Special Underwater Rules" section is provided for the DM.

When any of the following conditions occurs, proceed to the "Scuttling Death" section:

- One of the PCs starts to retreat from the cavern.
- Five of the six mercenaries have been subdued by the PCS.
- All of the PCs have lost half or more of their hit points.
- The DM decides that the battle has gone on long enough (for instance, if one or more of the PCs is about to die).

If one of the PCs retreats from the cavern before any of these conditions occurs, see the "Troubleshooting" section at the end of this chapter.

Encounter Key

The contest arena is an underground cavern consisting of several chambers. There are two entrances to the cavern, one on each side of a large hill. The walls and floors are packed earth. The ceilings are about ten feet high.

Refer to Map 4.

I. Southern Entrance

This ten-foot-diameter opening slopes about 20 yards into the ground. The PCs enter the arena here.

2. Crevasse

This area contains a wide crevasse that appears to be bottomless. A character who stands within one foot of the edge of the crevasse without taking precautions, such as holding the hand of a companion, must roll 1d20. On a roll of 1, the character slips and falls in. The crevasse is actually 30 feet deep; about a foot of black water at the bottom of the crevasse causes it to appear to be bottomless. A fall into the crevasse causes 2d6 points of damage; fallen victims cannot climb out unaided.

3. Large Pool

A large pool of water completely fills this chamber. A ridge of stone rises from the center of the pool, creating a natural stone bridge. The bridge is about three feet wide and crosses the center of the pool. A narrow bank surrounds the pool, about five feet wide on the southern and northern sides, but less than six inches wide on the western and eastern sides. Because the western and eastern banks are so narrow, most characters wishing to cross the pool must use the stone bridge.

The pool is about 25 feet deep. A giant catfish lives at the bottom.

Giant catfish: AC 7; MV SW 18; HD 7; hp 36; THAC0 13; #AT 1; Dmg 3d4 (bite); SA can swallow whole any person or object up to 3½ feet in length (a swallowed victim suffers normal bite damage, and suffers 1 point of damage and has a 5% chance of suffocating each round inside the fish; a victim with a small, sharp-edged weapon can cut himself free by inflicting internal damage equal to at least half of the fish's original total hit points; any attack from outside the fish has a 20% chance of damaging a swallowed victim as well); poison feelers cause 2d4 points of damage to a victim held in the mouth, as well as to additional victims within range of the feelers (roll a successful saving throw vs. poison for half damage); AL N

The catfish is extremely territorial and attacks any creature that enters its pool. It attacks with its bite and tries to swallow whole any victim who is small enough.

4. Underwater Passage (South)

Near the bottom of the large pool (area 3) is a seven-foot-diameter underwater passage leading to the small pool (area 8). The passage continues south from the small pool, winding deep into the earth. The underwater passage is large enough for the catfish (from area 3) to swim through.

5. Underwater Passage (North)

Similar to the large pool's other underwater passage (area 4), this passage leads from the bottom of the large pool and feeds into the bottom of the medium pool (area 15). The passage continues east from the medium pool, winding deep inside the earth. The underwater passage is large enough for the catfish (from area 3) to swim through.

6. Pit

This area contains a large pit about 20 feet deep. Sharp rocks line the bottom of the pit. Any character who falls into the pit suffers 2d6 points of damage. The sides of the pit are too sheer and smooth to climb; if a character falls in, a companion will have to help him out by lowering a rope or some other means.

7. Sloping Passage

This passage slopes about 15 feet into the earth, then drops 30 feet straight down. A character who falls into the soft earth below suffers 1d6 points of damage. A character can climb down the side of the ledge by using roots and rocks as handholds if he rolls a successful Dexterity check (alternatively, you can use the climbing rules explained on pages 122-123 of the 2nd Edition *Player's Handbook.* If the character fails the check, he falls to the bottom and suffers 1d6 points of damage.

The passage continues to slope into the earth, ending at a small pool (area 8).

8. Small Pool

A pool of water about 20 feet deep completely fills this chamber. Because there are no banks on the southwestern and northeastern sides, characters must swim or otherwise cross the water to reach the opposite side.

9. Rancid Chamber

This chamber reeks of decayed meat. Bones, sticks, and other refuse litter the floor. A small colony of horax lives in the refuse. They attack anyone who enters, scuttling along the walls and ceiling to pursue anywhere in the cavern. Victims are dragged back to this chamber and eaten.

Horax (3): AC 3; MV 15 (exceptional climbing ability enables them to cling and attack from almost any surface and angle); HD 4; hp 18 each; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 2d8; SA +1 bonus to their chance of being surprised, –1 bonus to initiative, locks its mandibles on successfully attacked victims causing an automatic 1d6 points of damage in each successive round (mandible lock can be broken by victim or a companion who spends an entire round working to dislodge the horax—if an attack roll is successful, the mandibles have been pried open); SD ice- and cold-based attacks against the horax have the effect of a *slow* spell for 2d6 rounds; AL N

The horax fight to the death to protect their territory (areas 9, 10, and 11). They charge their victims as fast as they can, one moving across the ground, the others moving across the walls and ceilings, in order to attack their victims from several angles. They attack with their razor-sharp mandibles.

10. Storage Chamber

This chamber contains the partially consumed remains of several horax victims. Among the remains are a leather purse containing 50 stl, two yellow pearls worth 100 stl each, and an amethyst ring worth 250 stl. The chamber opening is large enough for the horax to easily enter.

11. Egg Chamber

This chamber contains a dozen horax eggs and three immature horax. The young horax attack all intruders, but they do not leave the egg chamber.

Immature horax (3): AC 7; MV 15 (exceptional climbing ability enables them to cling and attack from almost any surface and angle); HD 1; hp 4 each; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6; SA +1 bonus to their chance of being surprised, –1 bonus to initiative; SD ice- and cold-based attacks against the horax have the effect of a *slow* spell for 2d6 rounds; AL N

Like the adult horax in area 9, the immature horax fight to the death to protect their territory; however, the immature horax do not leave area 11. They charge their victims as fast as they can, one moving across the ground, the others moving across the walls and ceilings, in order to attack their victims from several angles. They attack with their razor-sharp mandibles.

12. Sink Hole

This chamber contains a circular pit of partially sunken earth about 15 feet in diameter. Any character who comes within one foot of the sinkhole must roll a successful Dexterity check or fall 20 feet to the bottom, suffering 2d6 points of damage.

The interior walls of the sinkhole are sheer and smooth; unless a fallen character can climb walls or has a similar special ability, a companion will have to help him out (such as by lowering a rope).

13. Alcove

This is a small recess off the main passage leading to area 15. The entrance to the alcove is about three feet wide and hidden in the shadows, making it difficult to see.

14. Cracked Passage

The walls of this passage contain many small cracks. The floor is strewn with rubble.

15. Medium Pool

A medium-sized pool of water completely fills this chamber. Ridges of stone rise from the pool, creating a natural stone bridge in the shape of an "X." The bridge is about three feet wide. A bank surrounds the pool, no less then three feet at any point. The pool is about 25 feet deep.

16. Stone Wall

This is a natural stone wall about four feet high.

17. Northern Entrance

This ten-foot-diameter opening slopes about 20 yards into the ground. The mercenaries enter the arena here.

The Mercenaries' Strategy

With their 15-minute head start, the mercenaries have positioned themselves at various locations in the cavern. Their overall plan is to progressively weaken the PCs, then destroy them in or near area 15. When the PCs enter the cavern (area 1), the mercenaries are located as follows:

- Cha't is lying on the ground near the northern end of the stone bridge in area 3. He has covered himself with rubble and is pretending to be unconscious.
- Hol is submerged in the large pool (area 3). He is using his *potion of animal control* to control the catfish.
- Brutax and Shedra are hiding in area 13.
- Sanch and Zaz are hiding behind the stone wall (area 16).

For the DM's convenience, the map is divided into four sections. Although it's impossible to anticipate the strategy of the PCs, the battle is most likely to occur in distinct sections of the cavern as described below. Feel free to modify this sequence in response to the actions of the PCs.

1. Section A

As there's no reason for the PCs to explore this section, it's safe to assume that none of the battle will take place here. Likewise, the mercenaries won't go near this section. The horax remain in area 9 until the "Scuttling Death" encounter is triggered. If the PCs manage to discover and destroy the horax before the "Scuttling Death" encounter occurs, see the "Troubleshooting" section at the end of this chapter.

2. Section B

When the PCs enter the chamber containing the large pool (area 3), they see Cha't lying under some rubble near the northern end of the stone bridge. It appears as if part of the ceiling collapsed and fell on him. (Cha't is feigning unconsciousness, hoping to lure the PCs across the bridge.)

If one or more of the PCs crosses the stone bridge, Hol abruptly breaks through the surface of the water, grabs a ran-

dom PC, and attempts to yank him into the water. If successful, he then tries to yank a second PC into the water. PCs in the water are attacked by the dagger-wielding Hol and the giant catfish under Hol'S control.

As soon as the first PC is yanked into the water, Cha't springs to his feet and attacks random PCs with his blowgun. Cha't remains at some distance from the PCs at all times, so that he can escape through the passage leading to area 12 if necessary.

Hol, Cha't, and the catfish continue to attack the PCs until it appears that one or more of the PCs is on the verge of escaping through the passage to area 12. Before the first PC can reach the passage, Cha't dashes through the passage, taking an abrupt eastward turn to hide in area 13. If one or more of the PCs is in hot pursuit, Cha't runs to area 12, rather than risk having the PCs discover his companions in area 13. As soon as Cha't leaves Section B, Hol and the catfish swim through the underwater passage (area 5) and wait in the medium pool (area 15).

Contingency Plan: If the PCs don't go near the water—for instance, if they send a flying PC across the pool to investigate the motionless Cha't—Cha't abandons his plan; he springs to his feet and flees through the northern passage as described above. Hol and the catfish swim through the underwater passage and wait in the medium pool (area 15).

3. Section C

As soon as the PCs leave Section B, Shedra casts ventriloquism to produce the illusions of voices coming from area 12. The illusionary voices are those of the mercenaries. "I hear them coming!" whispers the illusionary Brutax. "Keep quiet! They'll hear you!" whispers the illusionary Sanch. Shedra continues with these voices in an attempt to lure the PCs into area 12.

If the PCs enter area 12, Brutax attacks them from behind, using his sling. Shedra flees to area 14. If Cha't ran from Section B to area 12 (instead of hiding in area 13), he attacks the PCs from the front while Brutax attacks from behind.

The mercenary attacks continue until the PCs are on the verge of moving east toward Section D. At that point, Brutax and Cha't flee to Section D and try to hide behind the stone wall (area 16). If Cha't is in area 12, he'll defend himself as long as possible, and then follow the PCs into Section D (of course, if the PCs decide to continue their attacks against Cha't in area 12, it's likely that Cha't will be subdued).

Contingency Plan: If the PCs aren't fooled by the voices coming from area 12, and instead head east toward Section D, the mercenaries abandon their plan; Brutax and Cha't head for area 15, and Shedra heads for area 14.

4. Section D

This is where the mercenaries plan to finish off the PCs. The mercenaries' plan depends on whether the PCs enter area 15 or area 14. If the PCs enter area 14, Shedra casts *summon swarm* to keep them busy (the swarm consists of beetles, spiders, and other small vermin from the cracks in the walls of area 14). Cha't (if available) and Brutax double back from area 15 and attack the PCs from the southern end of area 14. Sanch and Zaz abandon area 16 and join Shedra in attacking the PCs from the northern end of area 14. Hol leaves the pool (area 15) and joins the attack from the southern end of area 14.

If the PCs enter area 15, Sanch attacks with his bow from behind the stone wall (area 16). If Brutax and Cha't have had time to hide behind the stone wall, they attack with their sling and blowgun; otherwise, they turn to face the PCs on the banks and stone bridges of area 15. Shedra attacks the PCs from behind with her *summon swarm* spell; she casts *grease* on the bridges or banks of the pool to hinder the PCs' approach. Hol attempts to pull PCs who are on the bridges or banks into the water. Hol and the catfish attack any PCs who fall in the pool.

The mercenaries pursue the PCs into any area of the caverns. The mercenaries refuse to negotiate with the PCs.

Special Underwater Rules

Some of the arena combat may occur underwater. The DM may find the following rules helpful, adapted from the *Player's Handbook* and the *Dungeon Master's Guide* (for those wishing more detail, see page 79 of the *DMG.)*

Drowning: The base amount of time a character can hold his breath, in rounds, is equal to 1/3 of his Constitution rounded up. This assumes that the character had the chance to take a deep breath before submerging. If the character did not have the chance to take a deep breath, the base time is cut in half (rounded up). Regardless of any applicable penalties, any character can hold his breath for at least one round.

When his base time expires, a submerged character must roll a successful Constitution check once per round to continue holding his breath, with each check after the first having a cumulative –2 penalty to his Constitution score (for instance, there's a –2 penalty for the second round, a –4 penalty for the third round, and so on). A character drowns if he who fails a check.

Fighting in Water: Submerged surface dwellers suffer a –4 penalty to their attack rolls. This penalty is cut in half if the character has a proficiency in swimming. A character not immersed in water attempting to hit an opponent who is immersed also suffers a –4 penalty to his attack roll.

These penalties don't apply to creatures native to an aquatic environment.

Scuttling Death

Attracted by the sounds of battle, the three horax from area 9 scuttle from their lair, climb across the ceiling of area 8, and eventually make their way to the battle site (most likely in Section D).

The horax attack the first characters they see. If Zaz is still active, he panics as soon as he sees the horax and runs for the northern exit (area 17) as fast he can. If Sanch is still active, he screams for Zaz to stop. Zaz ignores him, and leaves the cavern, effectively ending the contest. (If Zaz isn't active when the horax enter, then a mercenary of the DM's choice panics and runs.)

As soon as a mercenary flees from the cavern, the remaining mercenaries realize that they've lost the contest. Rather than facing both the PCs and the horax, the mercenaries flee for the nearest exit. The victorious PCs also can leave the cavern, or they can remain behind and fight the horax.

Once all of the PCs and mercenaries leave the cavern, all surviving horax retreat to their lair (area 9). If there are any unconscious or otherwise subdued characters still in the cavern, the horax carry them back to their lair to eat them later.

Winners and Losers

When the contest ends, Ella congratulates the PCs and the mercenaries for a good fight. She then dismisses the mercenaries.

"I have no use for you. Go." Sanch begins to protest, but Ella cuts him off. "I'm not interested in excuses. You knew the rules. Now leave."

"We'll meet again," Sanch sneers at the PCs. "I promise you." The mercenaries vanish into the wilderness.

Ella asks the PCs for the details of the cavern battle, listening intently to whatever they have to say. She is particularly interested in what drove Zaz out of the cavern. If the PCs mention the horax, Ella cuts them off.

"Horax!" she exclaims. "Where there's a horax colony, there's bound to be treasure." If the PCs found the horax's storage chamber (area 10) and recovered the treasure, Ella demands half of what they found. If they didn't discover the treasure, Ella says that their first duty as her new employees is to go back into the cavern and find the horax treasure. (Make it clear that as Ella's employees, the PCs have no choice but to obey her.)

If the PCs must return to the cavern to recover the horax treasure, continue with the "Back to the Cavern" section. Otherwise, proceed to the "Briefing" section.

Back to the Cavern

All of the surviving horax have returned to their lair (area 9). To get to the lair, the PCs have to make their way down the ledge at area 7 and cross the pool at area 8. If the catfish originally in area 3 is still alive, it's waiting in the area 8 pool. The catfish attacks any PC who enters the water. If the catfish loses half of its hit points, it swims south through area 4, never to be seen again.

The horax fight to the death to protect their treasure, and they pursue the PCs to any location, though they do not leave the cavern. If the PCs defeat the horax, they can take the treasure from area 10; any PCs or mercenaries snatched by the horax are also here.

When the PCs return to Ella, she demands half of the treasure, but she allows the PCs to divide it as they wish. If the PCs rescued a subdued mercenary from the horax, Ella sends him on his way to rejoin his companions.

Briefing

With the contest resolved and the horax out of the way, Ella explains the details of their mission and her expectations of the PCs. She says that she's been hired by "somebody you'll meet later" to eliminate dragons in three locations. (As will be seen in Chapter 6, Erestem is the secret master of the dragon killers. She wants the dragons in each of these locations killed for specific reasons; the reasons are unknown to Ella.)

Ella spreads out a map on the ground (show the color fold-out map to the players) and points out the locations as follows:

• The village of Sargohgg (area 11 on the DM's Map on the inside cover panel; indicate this area to the players on the color map). "A black dragon was sighted here," says Ella. (This is a black dragon who snubbed Erestem's invitation to join her army of evil minions. Erestem wants him killed as a lesson to the other evil dragons.)

• The village of Pirim (area 15 on the DM's Map; point to this village on the color map). "A pair of red dragons has been sighted here," says Ella. (As with the black dragon, these red dragons snubbed Erestem, and she intends to make them pay for their insolence with their lives.)

• The village of Ahhar (area 29 on the DM's Map; point to this village on the color map). "Ahhar has been deserted for over a century," says Ella. "There's some type of reincarnated dragon here. I'm not sure exactly what we'll be dealing with, but I'm sure we can figure it out once we get there." (This is bizarre undead manifestation of a green dragon. Erestem believes that the destruction of the creature will release a burst of mystical energy that she can use to help create a portal to bring in evil minions from other planes of existence.)

In each case, says Ella, they need to obtain the ears of the dragons to prove they've destroyed them. Beginning tomorrow they have five weeks to complete all three assignments, after which they'll return to Ella's employer (whom she calls "the master") for their reward. Ella promises each PC 5,000 stl if they're successful (the salary is not negotiable).

Ella tells the PCs that they are responsible for the bulk of the fighting. It is also their responsibility to serve as bodyguards for her and Grott. Ella says they must be as discreet as possible and insists that they travel on foot. Regardless of who they meet, "you'll do all the talking. I can't risk anybody finding out who I am." Ella and Grott will attempt to travel incognito, wearing loose clothes and bulky hoods to cover their heads.

Grott nudges Ella and whispers in her ear, "Don't forget about Angomeith's decree." Ella grimaces and nods.

"One more thing," she says grudgingly. "Angomeith in his wisdom has decreed that all decisions on our mission must be made by you. I will offer advice only when asked." Ella grits her teeth; she isn't too happy about this, but she will comply with Grott's moon reading.

At this point, the PCs may ask questions about the mission. Ella answers as follows:

What if we destroy a dragon, but don't get its ear? Ella says her master is unwilling to accept any other evidence.

What if we fail to kill one of the dragons? Ella says her master still expects a full report, including all information about the dragon they can furnish.

What if five weeks expire before we complete all three assignments? "Your salary will be cut in half; the master will determine further punishments." Ella won't elaborate, but the prospect of displeasing her master clearly frightens her. (Chapter 2 explains what happens if the party takes too long to complete the assignments.)

What if someone recognizes you? Ella makes no effort to conceal from the PCs that she's a wanted criminal. "If they get me, they'll get you too. You're accomplices now. That's why we've got to be careful!'

Who pays our expenses? The PCs are responsible for their own expenses.

Who's the "master"? "This is none of your concern!' (See Chapter 6 for more about the "master!')

When the PCs have no more questions, Ella says they can either spend the remainder of the day resting, or they can get started. "You decide," she says resignedly.

Proceed to Chapter 2.

Troubleshooting

If the PCs disturb the mercenaries. The PCs may decide to ignore Ella's orders and attack or otherwise disturb the mercenaries while they're sleeping in the Snake's Grin Inn. If so, the disturbance alerts Ella who appears immediately to send the PCs back to bed. Likewise, the PCs may decide to attack the mercenaries when they first encounter them at the inn; the timely arrival of Ella and Grott prevents any such attack.

If the PCs betray Grott. If the PCs tell Ella that Grott spoke with them in their room (as a result of the "Second Disturbance" encounter), Grott flatly denies it, and Ella believes him.

If a PC retreats from the cavern. According to the rules, if a PC panics and retreats from the cavern, the mercenaries win. A benevolent DM might give the party a second chance by having the retreating PC trip and knock himself unconscious before he's actually able to leave the cavern.

CHAPTER 2: SOUTHERN STEAMWALL

This chapter begins immediately after the events in Chapter 1.

In this chapter, the party will explore the southern Steamwall region and attempt to complete the three assignments described in the "Briefing" section at the end of Chapter 1. At various points in the text, you will be referred to Chapters 3, 4, and 5; at the end of each of these chapters, you will return to an indicated section of Chapter 2. When the PCs have experienced the events of Chapters 3, 4, and 5, the adventure continues in Chapter 6.

The PCs begin in Gridmire. The PCs have five weeks to complete the assignments. If they run out of time, see the "Troubleshooting" section at the end of this chapter.

MORE ABOUT ELLA AND GROTT

Ella and Grott are intended to remain with the party for the duration of the adventure. If necessary, remind the PCs that it's in their best interests to keep Ella safe from harm and out of the hands of the authorities; Ella is their only source for discovering the identity and motive of the master of the dragonkillers (see Chapter 6).

As a result of the moon reading conducted at the Snake's Grin Inn (the "First Disturbance" encounter in Chapter 1), Ella and Grott allow the PCs to make all decisions, including where to go, how to get there, and what they do when they arrive. The PCs are to do all the talking with any encountered NPCs. If the PCs ask for suggestions, Ella and Grott say "Angomeith has decreed that it is for you to decide." Very rarely are Ella and Grott required to enter a village (for instance, Moon Reading No. 15—see below—requires Grott to speak to a villager). Otherwise, whenever the PCs decide to enter a village, Grott and Ella ask permission to remain hidden in the wilderness, rendezvousing with the PCs when their business in the village is finished. (If necessary, remind the PCs that Ella and Grott are wanted criminals.)

In combat situations, Grott and Ella run for cover at the earliest opportunity, relying on the PCs to protect them. Generally, monsters and other attackers save Grott and Ella for their final opponents. If circumstances are such that Ella's death is unavoidable, see the "Troubleshooting" section at the end of this chapter.

MOON READINGS

Grott and Ella believe that Angomeith uses Krynn's three moons to send messages and instructions to his followers. Every day shortly after sunset, Grott studies the moons for about 20 minutes to take a reading.

The Moon Reading Chart in the center section of the module shows the results of the various readings. To find the reading for a particular day, consult the Lunar Display Wheel and note the current positions of Krynn's moons. Refer to the Moon Reading Chart, cross-indexing the current position of Angomais with the positions of Solais and Lunais. The result is a Reading Number. Find the Reading Number on the list below; the results go into effect the following day.

If any of the moons are in the New Moon position, no reading is made that night, and there are no special effects for the following day.

Grott announces the results of the previous night's reading the first thing in the morning. Both Grott and Ella obey the reading without question, and they expect the PCs to do the same. Should the PCs decline to comply with a given reading, Grott and Ella refuse to go any farther until the PCs cooperate. (In the Reading Number descriptions below, the "party" refers to Ella and Grott, as well as the PCs.)

Cloud formations, weather conditions, and subtle shadings of the lunar surfaces can affect Grott's interpretation of a reading. Therefore, the DM may use the readings to feed the PCs information he wants them to have or send them in a direction he wants them to go. (For instance, if Reading Nurnber 1 is indicated, Grott could tell the party that not only must they meditate, they must also journey due north.)

READING NO. 1

The party must mediate silently for 1-2 hours before beginning the day's journey.

READING NO. 2

Before the party departs for the day, Grott spends an hour gathering herbs and roots, then boils them in water to make a soup that smells like cinnamon and fish. The soup is intended to clear the system of all impurities. All characters must take a sip, then roll a Constitution check. Those who fail suffer 1 point of damage.

READING NO. 3

Before the party departs for the day, Grott spends an hour gathering herbs and roots, then boils them in water to make a soup that smells like vinegar. All characters must take a sip, then roll a Constitution check. Those who succeed are affected as if they had consumed a *potion of healing.* Grott dumps the remainder of the soup on the ground after everyone's had a sip. (The soup loses its potency 15 minutes after it's made.)

READING NO. 4

All characters are required to make a monetary sacrifice to Angomeith. Grott collects 1 stl or its equivalent in equipment or goods from each PC; if the PCs are short on funds, they must spend the day finding a way to earn it. Assume that Ella and Grott always have enough funds to make the monetary sacrifice; however, under no circumstance do they loan money to the PCs. If the day ends and the PCs still don't have the money, the entire party must spend 1d6 hours meditating the following morning (this is in addition to any new moon reading requirements).

Grott dumps the donated funds into a crack in the earth or a deep lake; the funds should be considered lost.

READING NO. 5

Ella is forbidden to speak today.

READING NO. 6

The party must begin the day by traveling in a specific direction for a particular number of miles. To determine the di-

rection, roll 1d8 (1 = N, 2 = NE, 3 = E, and so on). To determine the number of miles, roll 1d10. (Roll again if it's impossible for the party to execute the result; for instance, roll again if they'd end up in the sea.)

Reading No. 7

The party is forbidden to light a fire today.

Reading No. 8

The party is forbidden to eat meat today.

Reading No. 9

Angomeith has declared that all of the party's food is unclean. The party must discard all of their food supplies. They must either purchase food in a village or forage for game. (If the party lacks the appropriate proficiencies, such as hunting or fishing, assume it takes them 2d4 hours to locate sufficient food in the wilderness to last the day.)

Reading No. 10

This is identical to Reading No. 5, except that each PC must make a monetary sacrifice of 2d10 stl or its equivalent. If the day ends and the PCs still don't have the money, the entire party must spend 2d6 hours meditating the following morning (this is in addition to any new moon reading requirements).

Reading No. 11

The party must build a huge bonfire in an open area that night and sleep beside it. There is a 20% chance that the fire attracts a curious monster (choose or roll randomly from the "Monster Attack" encounter in Encounter Zone 2).

Reading No. 12

Grott has received a prophecy indicating the possible location of a treasure. To determine the location of the treasure, roll 1d8 for the direction (1 = N, 2 = NE, 3 = E, and so on) and roll 1d10 for the number of miles. If this indicates an underwater location, the alleged treasure is at the bottom of the body of water. Otherwise, the party must dig straight down a distance of 2d10 feet. Roll 1d10 and consult Table 3 for the results. (The DM has the option of placing a lich, giant lizard, or other suitable guardian near the treasure site.)

Table 3: Moon Reading Treasure

D10 Roll	Results
1-5	Nothing
6-8	Bag containing 10d10 stl
9	1d4 gems
10	A magical weapon (Table 110 in the *DMG)*

Reading No. 13

The moon reading has triggered a usually dormant ability in Grott. He asks the party to join hands. All of the party members feel a tingle ripple through their bodies. Roll 1d10 on Table 4 for the results; the indicated enchantment persists for the entire day.

Table 4: Moon Reading Enchantment Effects

D10 Roll	Results
1	All characters gain a +1 bonus to their saving throws and attack rolls
2	All characters gain a +1 bonus to their saving throws
3-8	No effect
9	All characters suffer a –1 penalty to their saving throws
10	All characters suffer a –1 penalty to their saving throws and attack rolls

Reading No. 14

The party is forbidden to use any edged weapons today, with the exception of daggers and knives. Ella and Grott collect the edged weapons from the PCs; they will return them tomorrow.

Reading No. 15

Grott says they must journey to a village and ask a heathen to accept the word of Angomeith. While Ella waits in the wilderness, Grott leads the PCs to the nearest village and stops the first NPC he sees, asking, "Do you accept the word of Angomeith?" Fifty percent of the time, the NPC shrugs and says, "Sure, why not?" Even if the NPC says "no," Grott is satisfied that the party tried.

Generic NPCs

Most of the NPCs the party encounters in this chapter are humans, kender, or hobgoblins. The scrawny Steamwall hobgoblins have loose, red-brown skin and large bloodshot eyes. Unlike others of their type, the Steamwall hobgoblins aren't necessarily hostile to strangers, observing them with interest and even treating them like welcomed guests so long as the strangers don't offend them.

Unless otherwise indicated, use the statistics on the following page for NPCs. Feel free to vary the hit points and weaponry.

The typical human, kender, and hobgoblin villager statistics can be used for peasants, farmers, and other ordinary citizens. The exceptional human, kender, and hobgoblin villager statistics can be used for minor officials, guards, judges, and other characters more formidable than average. The hobgoblin chief statistics can be used for the rulers of hobgoblin villages.

The word "Militia" is used in the text as a generic term to describe a group of citizens who respond to illegal acts (or acts perceived as illegal). Human and kender militia consist of a varying number of exceptional villagers. Hobgoblin militia consists of a varying number of typical villagers, plus a few exceptional villagers serving as group leaders. Except where indicated, it's up to the DM to determine the composition of the militia (as a rule of thumb, the militia force should be large enough to convince the party that resistance is useless).

"Judiciary" is used in the text as a generic term to describe officials who pass judgment on those accused of committing crimes. A human or kender judiciary consists of one or more exceptional villagers. A hobgoblin judiciary consists solely of the chief, occasionally aided by one or more exceptional hobgoblins.

Kender, Typical Villager (0-level fighter)
AC 10; MV 9; hp 4; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 or by weapon (stonebow: range 4/8/12, dmg 1d4+1); SA taunt (distracting verbal abuse; any creature taunted for one full round must roll a successful saving throw vs. spell or attack wildly for 1d10 rounds with a –2 penalty to attack rolls and a +2 penalty to Armor Class); SD immune to all forms of fear; saving throws against spells and poisons gain a +4 bonus); AL LN

Kender, Exceptional Villager (2nd-level fighter)
AC 7; MV 6; hp 14; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 or by weapon (stonebow: range 4/8/12, dmg 1d4 + 1); SA taunt (distracting verbal abuse; any creature taunted for one full round must roll a successful saving throw vs. spell or attack wildly for 1d10 rounds with a –2 penalty to attack rolls and a +2 penalty to Armor Class); SD immune to all forms of fear; saving throws against spells and poisons gain a +4 bonus); AL LN

Hobgoblin, Typical Villager
AC 10; MV 9; HD 1 + 1; hp 5; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d3 (bone knife); AL LE

Hobgoblin, Exceptional Villager
AC 5 (bone armor); MV 9; HD 1 + 1; hp 9; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 (spear or short sword); AL LE

Hobgoblin Chief
AC 3 (bone armor with metal reinforcement); MV 9; HD 2; hp 16; THAC0 19 (fights as 3-HD monster); #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 + 2 (spear or short sword; dmg includes +2 bonus for Strength); AL LE

Human, Typical Villager (0-level fighter)
AC 10; MV 12; hp 4; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 (club or short sword); AL N

Human, Exceptional Villager (1st-level fighter)
AC 8; MV 12; hp 9; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8 (battle axe or long sword); AL N

About the Villages

The southern Steamwall region is a hostile and treacherous land. Trade is sluggish, visitors are few, and the destitute human and hobgoblin inhabitants tend to be mean-spirited and unsophisticated. Most live in isolated villages that rarely exceed 1,000 residents. A typical human village consists of a cluster of shacks, workshops, and stables with walls of stone or wood and roofs of straw thatch or sod. Hobgoblin villages are collections of longhouses made of stone and thatched roofs, many of them set on stilts to keep out vermin. Kender villages consist of shacks made of odd assemblies of stone, wood, brick, and thatch; the villages also include small gardens and grain fields.

Each village listed in the Encounter Key includes the following information:

Size

This is number of residents in the village.

Race

This is the village's dominant race.

Goods

All of the goods, equipment, and services listed on the Equipment Lists on pages 66-68 of the *Player's Handbook* of the indicated value level or less are available for purchase. For instance, if the value limit is 1 gp, then soft boots are for sale, but riding boots are not. Remember to convert all prices to the Krynn steel standard (1 gp = 1 stl).

Law Level

A general rating of the village's respect for law and order, its standards of fairness and justice, and its tolerance of criminal activity. This includes the following information:

- **Initial Impression:** The party's first impression of the village and the general attitude of the villagers toward the party.
- **Trade Notes:** Any special conditions regarding the sale of goods.
- **Village Encounter Table:** The party may experience a number of special encounters while in the village. For every waking hour the PCs spend in the village, roll 1d20 on the appropriate table to see if an encounter occurs. Encounters continue to occur until the "No Further Encounters" result is indicated. If an encounter is rolled a second time, roll for a different encounter, or treat as No Further Encounters; alternately, the DM can modify the details of the indicated encounter to make it different. If the PCs return to this village after at least a week has passed, roll for new encounters as if the PCs were visiting the village for the first time. Instead of rolling, the DM may choose specific encounters from the list if he wishes.
- **Law Enforcement Routine:** How the village handles infractions of the law. The DM may use the routine to punish the party if they commit blatant criminal acts while in the village. Otherwise, the text specifies when to use the routine.

The three Law Levels are described in detail below:

Law Level 1 Village

Initial Impression: The village is reasonably clean and well-kept. The villagers regard the party with curiosity and engage them in small talk. Most have no useful information for the party, but they can direct them to the village's inns, shops, and other locations.

Trade Notes: Goods sell for the listed prices. All are of acceptable quality.

Table 6: Law Level 1 Village Encounters

D20 Roll	Result
1	Suspicious Stranger
2-4	Equipment Merchant
5	Weapons Merchant
6	Potion Merchant
7-8	Employment Opportunity
9	Informant
10-11	Information (True)
12-13	Information (False)
14	Map
15-20	No Further Encounters

Table Notes:

Suspicious Stranger: A grouchy tradesman accuses the PCs of shoplifting merchandise. Execute the Law Enforcement Routine. At the hearing, the tradesman realizes he made a mistake, but is too proud to admit it. If the PCs offer any reasonable defense, the judiciary sets them free.

Equipment Merchant: A friendly merchant has all of the items on the Household Provisioning and Miscellaneous Equipment lists (page 67 of the *Player's Handbook)* for sale at the given cost.



Weapons Merchant: A traveling weapons merchant approaches the party. He offers for sale all of the weapons on the Weapon List (pages 68-69 of the *Player's Handbook)* that have a price of 20 gp or less; he sells these items at the listed price. He has only one of each weapon available.

Potion Merchant: A traveling merchant approaches the party, telling them he has one dose of a magical potion for sale at a low price. Roll randomly on Table 89 on page 135 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide* to determine the potion. To determine the price in stl, roll 1d4 and multiply the result by 100.

Employment Opportunity: A friendly village official approaches the party and offers them temporary employment. The job is simple manual labor, such as clearing debris, sweeping streets, or harvesting crops. Each character will earn 10 stl per day and may work as many as five consecutive days, eight hours per day. Room and board are included. (Don't check for encounters while the party is working.)

Informant: The party notices a man following them from a distance. He watches them closely, darting into a building when he thinks the party sees him. If the party approaches him, he yells for help; execute the Law Enforcement Routine. If the party ignores the man and remains in the village for the next two hours, execute the Law Enforcement Routine (if the party leaves the village within two hours, nothing special happens).

At the hearing, the man claims the PCs are associates of known criminals. If the PCs deny the charge, the man says he has it on good authority that the PCs were seen in Gridmire with the notorious Gezele Ella. The judiciary gives the PCs the chance to defend themselves, but unless they come up with an exceptionally good story, they're found guilty (see the Law Enforcement Routine at the end of this section for the results of a guilty verdict).

Information (True): The PCs engage a villager in conversation who knows one of the pieces of information on Table 7 (roll 1d6 or choose a specific piece of information). The villager reveals the information if the PCs ask the right questions. All of the information is accurate.

Table 7: True Information

D6 Roll	Result
1	The direction and approximate distance of all villages and geographic locations (such as volcanos, valleys, and mountains) within a 100-mile radius. However, he knows no details about these locations.
2	The direction and approximate distance of all villages and geographic locations (such as volcanos, valleys, and mountains) within a 100-mile radius. He also knows some general information about the locations (for instance, he knows the size, race, and Law Level-related details of the villages).
3	A dragon sighting in the village of Pirim. "Big mean red ones. Some brass dragons around there too."
4	A dragon sighting in the village of Sargohgg. "A black one. I hear the place has been overrun with sligs."
5	A rumor that a green dragon was buried in the village of Ahhar about a century ago.
6	A rumor that an evil gnome and "some kind of lizard man" are operating on an island a few miles off the Indanalis coast. "I hear that they've been paying people to kill dragons."

Information (False): The PCs engage a villager in conversation who knows one of the pieces of information on Table 8 (roll 1d4, choose a specific piece of information, or make up one of your own, based on a fact from later in the adventure that can be misrepresented here). The villager reveals the information if the PCs ask the right questions. Though the villager believes his information is true, it's completely inaccurate.

Table 8: False Information

D4 Roll	Result
1	A dragon has been elected king of Kristophan.
2	All the dwarves moved out of the Steamwall Mountains to go underground.
3	A minotaur gang has been hiring hunters to kill all the dragons.
4	A female wizard who lives in the bottom of the Indanalis Sea is plotting to take over the world.

Map: A friendly young villager approaches the party and offers to sell them a map that shows the best route from the village to any destination within a 100-mile radius. His price is 50 stl per destination. If the PCs agree, the villager draws a sketch map leading from the village to the destination specified by the PCs. (Sketch out the route on a piece of scrap paper and give it to the players; the route should more or less follow a straight line between the village and the destination). If the PCs take this route, they will travel at their normal movement rate, regardless of the terrain.

Law Enforcement Routine: A militia force surrounds the party, sufficient in number to convince the party that resistance is useless. They escort the party to the local judiciary, who asks the militia to explain the nature of the crime. The party is then allowed to present their defense. If the party presents a convincing defense (that is, if the DM is convinced), the charges are dismissed and the party is free. If the judiciary isn't convinced, the party is found guilty and escorted into the countryside and warned not to return. If the PCs ignore the warning, return to the village, and are again brought before the judiciary for a different crime, the judiciary finds the party automatically guilty. They are punished as described in the Law Level 2 Law Enforcement Routine.

Law Level 2 Village

Initial Impression: The village is grimy and dingy, but the buildings are in reasonably good shape. Most villagers are indifferent to the party. Those willing to speak with the party seem suspicious and cold. They avoid small talk and most have no useful information; however, they direct the party to the village's inns, shops, and other locations.

Trade Notes: Merchants try to sell their goods to the party at 150% of the listed price (for instance, the price of a small barrel is three stl instead of the usual two stl). If the party balks, the merchant reluctantly lowers the cost to the normal listed price.

There is a 15% chance that any purchased item is so inferior as to be useless (a cup of ale is sour, a barrel leaks, a flask of oil won't ignite). If the party demands a refund, the merchant summons the militia; execute the Law Enforcement Routine.

Table 9: Law Level 2 Village Encounters

D20 Roll	Result
1-2	Law Level 1 Encounter
3-5	Unusual Goods
6-7	Extortionist
8-9	Questioning
10-11	Black Market Goods
12-13	Fortune Teller
14-15	Employment Offer
16-20	No Further Encounters

Table Notes:

Law Level 1 Encounter: Roll on the Law Level 1 Village Encounter Table.

Unusual Goods: A traveling merchant offers to sell several unusual items to the party. Some or all of the items are available, as determined by the DM (the DM may also introduce unusual goods of his own creation). The salesman does not negotiate on the prices.

1. A flask of milky liquid that smells like lemons. "This is a magical potion of health. It'll keep you safe from any disease and cure any disease you have now." He wants 100 stl for the flask, which contains four doses. (There is a 90% chance that the potion is useless. There is a 10% chance that it will indeed cure any disease if the drinker rolls a successful system shock roll.)

2. A clay bowl containing a thick gray paste. "Rub this paste on your skin, and lava can't hurt you." He wants 75 stl for the bowl, which contains enough paste to affect three characters. (The paste is actually a *salve of lava protection.* When applied to the skin, it provides complete protection from the heat of lava.)

3. A stone sculpture of a hobgoblin's head, about two inches in diameter. "This is a charm that will protect you from evil forces." He wants 20 stl for it. (There is a 90% chance that the charm is useless. There is a 10% chance that the charm imbues the wearer with a special protection that causes all attacking evil creatures to suffer a –1 penalty to their attack rolls.)

4. A red lizard about three inches long. The lizard has bright yellow eyes, a blue ridge down his back, and a darting tongue. "When there's a dragon around, this little fellow's skin turns black." He wants 200 stl for the lizard. (The lizard's skin does indeed turn black when any dragon is within 100 yards. The lizard consumes flies and other small insects and is completely harmless. It also has an extremely short life span and will die from old age in about 10 weeks.)

There is 1 in 6 chance that any PC who touches the lizard suffers an allergic reaction. PCs suffering a reaction experience an itching rash for the next 1d4 days, causing them to suffer a –1 penalty to all attack rolls during that time. The allergic reaction can be negated by *cure disease* or a similar spell, or by bathing in the healing waters in the village of Hurlock (area 6—see Encounter Key).

Blue Ridged Lizard: AC 10; HD 1-1; hp 2; THAC0 nil; #AT nil; Dmg nil; SD red skin turns black when within 100 yards of any dragon, completely immune to all forms of dragon breath; AL N

Extortionist: A slovenly NPC approaches the party and tells them that he's heard they've been seen with the notorious Gezele Ella. Unless the party pays him 10d10 stl, he'll inform the authorities. If the PCs pay the bribe, the NPC slinks away, never to be seen again. If the PCs attack him or refuse to pay, he summons the militia; execute the Law Enforcement Routine.

Questioning: A militia group intercepts the party and asks them to identify themselves. If the PCs refuse, the militia summons reinforcements; execute the Law Enforcement Routine. If the PCs cooperate, the militia asks them where they're from, what they're doing in the village, and how long they intend to stay. If the PCs answer nicely, the militia warns them to stay out of trouble, then sends them on their way. If the PCs don't cooperate, the militia summons reinforcements; execute the Law Enforcement Routine.

Black Market Goods: A shady NPC calls to the party from an alley. He offers them an array of goods that he assures them are "one of a kind. Their original owners had to give them up kind of suddenly." If the PCs ask if the goods are stolen, the NPCs says, "Well, what do you think, stupid?" (They are indeed stolen.) Some or all of the items are available, as determined by the DM (the DM is also free to add other items to the list). If the PCs haggle, the salesman accepts half of his stated price.

1. A silver necklace with an emerald pendant. Actual value: 3,000 stl. NPC's price: 1,500 stl.

2. A *dagger +1.* NPC's price: 150 stl.
3. A *ring of fire resistance.* NPC's price: 500 stl.
4. Three black pearls. Actual value: 300 stl each. NPC's price: 150 stl each.

If the PCs buy any of the items, there is a 20% chance that the NPC reveals he is working for the local judiciary, trying to find out who's been buying stolen goods. The NPC retrieves the items, returns their money, and summons the militia; execute the Law Enforcement Routine.

Fortune Teller: An old woman approaches the PCs, claiming she can tell the fortune of the entire party by reading the palm of any one of the PCs. Her fee is two cp. If the PCs agree, she studies the palm of any PC who volunteers. To determine the fortune, roll 1d4 on Table 10.

Table 10: Old Woman's Fortunes

D4 Roll	Result
1	"Believe the dreams of the brass dragon. He tells the truth." (The fortune is accurate—see Chapter 3.)
2	"Great danger awaits you. Proceed with caution." (The fortune is accurate but obvious.)
3	"The ones you seek serve the goddess of darkness." (The fortune is accurate—see Chapter 6.)
4	"The future looks good. There are no signs of danger. Everyone you meet will welcome you as members of their own family." (Not true by a long shot.)

Employment Offer: A local official (use exceptional villager statistics) approaches the party, asking them if they'd be interested in some work. He offers them one of the following jobs (DM's choice), warning them that they'll only be paid if they complete it successfully. If the PCs decline, the official shrugs and walks away; the encounter is over.

• A monster that lives just outside of town has been terrorizing the citizens. The official offers the party 100 stl if they destroy it. (Choose a monster from the "Monster Attack" encounter in Encounter Zone 2. Assume the monster is lurking in its lair when the PCs arrive.)

• Local farmers are interested in planting crops on the hillsides just outside of town, but they've been unable to figure out an adequate irrigation system. Any PC who figures out an efficient way to irrigate the hillside crops earns 100 stl. (Only a PC with the engineering proficiency is capable of designing a system sophisticated enough for this situation. If the proficiency check succeeds, he earns the reward.)

• The official leads the party to a 50-foot-square field surrounded by a fence. A large white warhorse grazes contentedly inside. The official tells the party that the horse is a new acquisition of the village chieftain, but he's not sure if anyone is capable of riding it. The first PC able to stay on the horse earns 50 st.

Medium War Horse: AC 7; MV 18; HD 2 + 2; hp 15; THAC0 19; #AT 2; Dmg 1d6/1d6; AL N

Several villagers hold the horse steady while a volunteering PC mounts it. If the PC has either the land-based riding or animal handling proficiency and rolls two successful proficiency checks, he is able to stay on the horse. A PC without such a proficiency has a 20% chance of staying on. A PC who doesn't stay on is thrown to the ground, suffering 1d4 points of damage. Additionally, the horse attacks the PC until he leaves the field. The PCs can make as many attempts as they like until one of them has a successful ride. If the PCs intentionally harm the horse in any way, the official summons the militia; execute the Law Enforcement Routine.

Law Enforcement Routine: A militia group surrounds the party, sufficient in number to convince the party that resistance is useless. They escort the party to the local judiciary who asks the militia to explain the nature of the crime. The party is then allowed to present their defense. Unless the PCs are extremely convincing (in the DM's opinion), the judiciary finds them guilty. For minor crimes (such as loitering or damaging property), the judiciary fines them a total of 2d10 stl; if they can't pay, he incarcerates them for a night. For major crimes (such as theft or public violence), he fines them 1d4 x 100 stl and incarcerates them for 3d6 days; if they can't pay, he doubles the length of the incarceration. (The DM may modify these punishments as he sees fit.)

The party is incarcerated in a 25-foot-deep pit near the outskirts of town. Wooden planks weighted with large boulders secure the top of the pit. There are always 2d4 exceptional villagers guarding the pit; assume the guards can summon as much help as they need if the PCs attempt an escape.

Roll 1d4 once on Table 11 to see if any of the following special circumstances apply to the incarceration. (Alternately, the DM can choose a particular circumstance.)

Table 11: Special Incarceration Circumstances

D4 Roll	Results
1	Pardon
2	Bribe Opportunity
3	Escape Opportunity
4	No Special Circumstance

Table Notes:

Pardon: On the second night of their incarceration (assuming the party's sentence is more than one day), the judiciary abruptly pardons them. (The judiciary is concerned that excessive punishment of visitors will have an adverse effect on trade.)

Bribe Opportunity: The guards tell the PCs that if they pay them 2d10 stl or its equivalent in equipment, they'll let them go. The guards are true to their word. (They'll later claim that the PCs did indeed serve their entire sentence.)

Escape Opportunity: Rubble and debris is piled in a corner of the pit. If the PCs search the debris, they discover that it conceals a tunnel dug by previous prisoners. The tunnel leads to an opening in the ground about 50 yards away from the village.

Law Level 3 Villages

Initial Impression: The village is dismal and filthy, with the buildings in various states of disrepair. The villagers are indifferent to the party at best, openly hostile at worst. If the PCs approach a resident for directions or to make small talk, there is a 70% chance the resident ignores them, a 20% chance the resident agrees to talk with them in exchange for a coin or a drink (the resident has no useful information, aside from knowing various locations within the village), and a 10% chance the resident screams for help (execute the Law Enforcement Routine). Even without a resident's help, the party should be able to find merchants, shops, and other locations.

Trade Notes: Merchants try to sell all goods at twice the listed price. They refuse to lower the price unless the party threatens them with violence; the price then becomes the normal listed price.

There is a 30% chance that any item is so inferior as to be useless (a cup of ale is sour, a barrel leaks, a flask of oil won't ignite). If the party demands a refund, the merchant summons the militia; execute the Law Enforcement Routine.

Table 12: Law Level 3 Village Encounters

D20 Roll	Result
1	Law Level 2 Encounter
2-3	Thug's Challenge
4-5	Mugging Victim
6-7	Coin Game
8-9	Muggers
10-11	Black Market Goods
12-13	Visitor's Pass
14-15	Information
16-20	No Further Encounters

Table Notes:

Law Level 2 Encounter: Roll for an encounter on the Law Level 2 Village Encounter Table (Table 9).

Thug's Challenge: A huge thug accompanied by a group of villagers approaches the party. The thug challenges the party to volunteer one of their number for "a friendly duel. Don't insult me by turning me down." If the party declines, the thug is offended; execute the Law Enforcement routine (the thug joins the attack). Choose whichever thug is appropriate to the village:

Human Thug (3rd-level fighter): AC 10; MV 12; hp 20; THAC0 18; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 (club); AL LE

Hobgoblin Thug: AC 5 (bone armor); MV 9; HD 2; hp 16; THAC0 17 (fights as 3-HD monster); #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 + 2 (club; dmg includes +2 bonus for Strength); AL LE

If the party accepts the challenge, any PC may volunteer to fight the thug. The villagers encircle the PC and the thug while the fight. The PC can use his weapons. The fight continues until either the thug or the PC loses half his hit points, at which time the villagers break it up. If the PC wins, the thug mutters insults under his breath as his friends lead him away. If the thug wins, he and his companions jeer at the PCs and tell them to get out of town in a hour. If the PCs are still in town an hour later, the thug and some friends ambush them (execute the Law Enforcement Routine, with the thug included).

Mugging Victim: The PCs spot a young man lying unconscious in the street. If the PCs offer him a drink of water, give him first aid, or help in some other way, he revives. He tells the PCs he was a mugging victim and thanks them for their help. He offers to serve as their escort for the rest of the day. If they agree, the PCs have a 50% of avoiding the Law Enforcement Routine, regardless of their actions.

Coin Came: The party is invited to participate in a coin game taking place behind a building near the outskirts of the village. Two NPCs (typical villagers) run the game. One or all of the PCs may participate. To play, a PC wagers up to 10 stl and declares if the flip of a coin will be heads or tails. If the PC guess correctly, he wins the amount of his bet. If he guesses incorrectly, he loses his bet. (Roll any die; if an odd number comes up, the result is heads; if an even number comes up, the result is tails. Alternately, you can flip a real coin.) Only one PC can wager per coin flip.

If any PC wins three times, the NPCs end the game, accuse the PC of cheating, and demand that he return all his winnings to them. If the PC refuses, the NPCs call for help; execute the Law Enforcement Routine.

Muggers: A gang of villagers (3d4 typical villagers) emerges from the shadows and ambushes the PCs. The gang intends to kill all the PCs, then rob them. If half of the villagers lose half or more or their hit points, all surviving gang members scatter and flee.

Black Market Goods: A shady NPC calls to the party from an alley. He offers them an array of goods that he matter-of-factly says have been stolen. Some or all of the following items are available, as determined by the DM. The NPC will not lower these prices.

1. Golden yellow topaz ring. Actual value: 600 stl. NPC's price: 200 stl.
2. A large crimson gem that the NPC says he can't identify. Actual value: worthless (it's glass). NPC's price: 25 stl.
3. A random magical potion. NPC's price: 100 stl.
4. A random +1 magical weapon, with a 25% chance of one special ability. NPC's price: 150 stl.

Visitor's Pass: A pair of intimidating NPCs (use exceptional villager statistics) approaches the party and demands to see their "visitor's pass." Assuming the PCs don't have the pass, the NPCs demand one stl per character. If the PCs pay, the NPCs give them a piece of worthless scrap paper, snicker at them, then walk away. If the PCs decline to pay the fee, the NPCs summon help; execute the Law Enforcement Routine.

Information: A shady NPC (use typical villager statistics) offers to sell the party some interesting information for one stl. He makes no guarantees about the accuracy of the information. He knows one piece of information from Table 13 (roll 1d4 or invent a specific piece of information).

Table 13: Shady NPC Information

D4 Roll	Information
1	"There's a wizard in Kleeg who's trying to take over Pirim. Watch out for him." (True)
2	"The rulers of Ethany have special mental powers. They know just about everything." (True)
3	"Want to buy some weapons? They make the best ones in Saddlerock." (True)
4	"If you're looking for help, go to Tyaru. They're the friendliest people in the Steamwalls." (False)

Law Enforcement Routine: If the PCs are in a human village, 3d4 exceptional villagers surround them. If the PCs are in a hobgoblin village, 2d4 typical villagers plus 1d4 exceptional villagers surround them. The NPCs attack the PCs, ignoring any protests of innocence. The NPCs intend to kill the PCs; however, if half of the NPCs lose half or more of their hit points, all of the surviving NPCs flee.

Encounter Key

Refer to the DM's Map on the inside panel cover.

1. Gridmire

Size: 342
Race: Human
Goods: 10 gp
Law Level: 3

This is where the party originally met Ella (see Chapter 1). If the party returns here for any reason, check for encounters on the Village Encounter Table (Table 12). Alternatively, you can run the "Drunken Beggar" and "Distressed Damsel" encounters from the "Into the Village" section of Chapter 1 if the party hasn't already experienced them.

2. Encounter Zone

This area is desolate and grim, consisting of rough and rocky hills and a few streams and ponds, most of which are contaminated by the poison wastes rolling down from the Steamwall Mountains. The sandy soil, laced with ash and pollutants, is unsuitable for all but the hardiest weeds and shrubs. Temperatures linger in the low 70s during the day, dropping to the 60s at night.

When the party enters the area, roll 1d12 on Table 14 and immediately run the indicated encounter. For every four game hours the party remains in this area, roll 1d6. On a roll of 5 or 6, another encounter on Table 14 takes place (roll 1d12). You are free to alter the frequency or to choose specific encounters as you see fit.

Table 14: Encounter Zone 2

D12 Roll	Encounter
1	Monster Attack
2	Overcast
3	Light Rain
4-5	Trail
6	Dragon Scholar
7	Geographer
8	Clearing/Rough Travel
9	Hobgoblin Gang
10	Dragon Dream
11	Reminder
12	Mysterious Travelers

Table Notes:

Monster Attack: A monster leaps (or scuttles) from a concealed area (brush, cliff, or hole) and attacks the PCs. Grott and Ella take cover, relying on the PCs to defend them. Roll 1d6 or choose a specific monster: 1 = giant boar, 2 = giant scorpion, 3 = mountain lion, 4 = giant trap door spider, 5 = wolves, 6 = giant lizard.

Giant Boar: AC 6; MV 12; HD 7; hp 30; THAC0 13; #AT 1; Dmg 3d6; AL N

Giant Scorpion: AC 3; MV 15; HD 5 + 5; hp 25; THAC0 15; #AT3; Dmg 1d10/1d10/1d4; SA poison sting (victim must roll a successful saving throw vs. poison or die); AL N

Mountain Lion: AC 6; MV 15; HD 3 + 1; hp 18; THAC0 17; #AT 3; Dmg 1d3/1d3/1d6; SA rear claws for 1d4/1d4 if both forepaws successfully hit; SD surprised only on a 1; AL N

Giant Trap Door Spider: AC 4; MV 3, Wb 12; HD 4 + 4; THAC0 15; hp 25; #AT 1; Dmg 2d4; SA shoot webs up to three feet; a successful hit means the victim has been grabbed (grabbed victim can free himself with a successful Strength check with a –2 penalty; at least two characters whose Strength totals 20 or more can wrench the victim loose), victims of a successful bite attack must roll a successful saving throw vs. poison or suffer an additional 1d6 points of damage; SD can detect vibrations of approaching creatures up to 50 yards away; victims have a –5 penalty to their surprise rolls; AL N

Wolves (4): AC 7; MV 18; HD 2 + 2; hp 10 each; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4+1; AL N

Giant Lizard: AC 5; MV 15; HD 3 + 1; hp 20; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8; SA any attack roll score of 20 causes double damage; AL N

Overcast: The sky is cloudy all day and all night, preventing Grott from making a moon reading. Consequently, there will be no moon reading effects for the following day. (However, the DM should advance the moons on the Lunar Display Wheel as usual.)

Light Rain: Light rain begins to fall and persists for the next 1d10 hours. The rain has a greenish tinge and smells like rotten fish (the contaminated rain clouds have blown in from the Indanalis Sea). If a character is exposed to the rain for two consecutive hours, he must roll a Constitution check. If he fails the check, he becomes nauseated and his head begins to throb; he makes all attack rolls with a –1 penalty for the rest of the day.

Trail: The party discovers a trail that leads to the nearest village. If they follow the trail, they move at their normal movement rate.

Dragon Scholar: This encounter occurs only if the party is within 50 miles of Hurlock (area 6).

The party sees an elderly kender (use typical halfling villager statistics) on his knees, bent over an indentation in the ground. He uses a long rope to measure the indentation from various angles, jotting down the measurements on a piece of parchment. If the PCs approach him, he looks up and mumbles a greeting, then returns to his work. If the PCs decide to leave him and alone continue on their way, the encounter is over.

If the PCs ask what he's doing, the kender gets to his feet and points at the indentation. "A dragon print," he says with pride. "You don't see many dragon prints in this part of the country. Pretty good sized, too." He then resumes his measuring.

The kender dismisses any of the PCs' questions or comments with a shrug, giving the impression that he's got better things to do than talk with them. However, if the PCs express even the slightest interest in dragons (for instance, if they ask about the type of dragon that made the print), he perks up. "Are you interested in dragons? Fascinating creatures, are they not?" He introduces himself as Milo Brownbrun of Hurlock and says he's devoted his entire life to the study of dragons. He says he believes the dragon print belongs to a red dragon, but he's not sure.

Milo is happy to answer any of the PCs' general questions about Taladas dragons (assume he knows all of the information about the Othlorx given in the *Rule Book to Taladas* in the *Time of the Dragon* boxed set; this information is also available in the fourth volume of the *Monstrous Compendium).* If the PCs ask questions about the existence of dragons in the southern Steamwall region, Milo says, "I have such information, but I would need to check my notes at home." He offers to take the party to Hurlock so he can check his records. Milo refuses to give them any information about the Steamwall dragons unless he can consult his records. "Incorrect information is worse than no information at all," he says stubbornly, "and I pride myself on accuracy." If the PCs agree to accompany Milo to Hurlock, proceed to area 6; it's not necessary to check for Encounter Zone encounters along the way. If the PCs decline to go to Hurlock, Milo returns to his work and wishes them good luck; the encounter is over.

This encounter occurs only once.

Geographer: A smiling human (use typical villager statistics) carrying a large knapsack shouts at the PCs as they pass through a clearing. "Fellow travelers!" he says cheerily. "Please wait!" If the PCs ignore him, the man shrugs and walks away; the encounter is over.

If the PCs wait for him, the man approaches, extending his hand in friendship. He identifies himself as Mell Ahagale, a scholar from Kristophan. "I am a geographer," he says. "Among Taladas's best, if I say so myself." He's spent most of the last year traveling across the Southern Hosk area, making detailed maps. "My life's work," he says proudly.

Mell asks the PCs their names and their destination, then admits that it's been a while since he's had any intelligent conversation. "I've been exploring the Steamwall. Not too many friendly faces." If the party is agreeable, Mell suggests they share some ale (he has plenty) and talk for a while.

Mell is very interested in any of the party's discoveries they care to share. If they tell him anything especially interesting—say, a sighting of a dragon or an encounter with a bizarre creature—he makes a note of it.

Mell also has a lot of information to share, if the PCs ask the right questions. He knows the location of any village in the southern Steamwall region. He can furnish some general in-

formation about each village (he knows the approximate size and the dominant race as well as their attitude toward outsiders (a Law Level 1 village is "civilized and quite friendly," a Level 2 village is "run-down but liveable; the people keep to themselves," and a Level 3 village "can be dangerous; the people have their own ideas of law and order."). If asked about the Steamwall, he tells them to be wary of the streams, the rain, and any unusual mist formations. "Clouds blow up from the Indanalis and mingle with the rain. A lot of the water is poisonous." After he's spent about an hour with the party, Mell says it's time for him to go. If the PCs ask him to accompany them, he regretfully declines, saying he's on his way back to Kristophan.

This encounter occurs only once.

Clearing/Rough Travel: The party has entered either a clear area or an extremely rough area. Roll 1d6; 1-3 = a clear area, 4-6 = a rough area. To determine the number of miles of clear or rough area, roll 1d4. While traveling this distance through a clear area, the party moves at their normal rate. While traveling this distance through a rough area, the party moves at ¼ of their normal rate.

Hobgoblin Gang: This encounter occurs only if the party is within 50 miles of Agga (area 8). A gang of four hobgoblins intercepts the PCs (use exceptional villager statistics). All wear dark green clothes; the hobgoblins are Agga residents, bitter enemies of Grobb. What happens next depends whether the PCs have visited Grobb (area 7).

• The PCs have visited Grobb: Agga spies spotted the PCs in Grobb and spread the word that the party was seen associating with the enemy. The hobgoblin gang attacks the party, intending to kill the PCs first, then Ella and Grott (Ella and Grott head for cover during the battle). The hobgoblins fight to the death, all the while shouting, "Death to the Grobbers!" They do not negotiate with the PCs.

• The PCs haven't visited Grobb. The hobgoblins aren't openly hostile. They ask the PCs their names and business in the area. Deciding the PCs aren't affiliated with Grobb, the hobgoblins warn them to stay out of Grobb. "A stinking hole, fit only for vermin." The hobgoblins won't elaborate, nor do they have any other useful information. If the PCs attack the gang, the hobgoblins respond by fighting to the death; otherwise, the gang sends the PCs on their way.

This encounter occurs only once.

Dragon Dream: This encounter won't occur if the party has already been to Pirim (area 15). The encounter occurs only at night.

After the PCs drift off to sleep, they all experience a dream of a ghostly brass dragon, its skin torn and bleeding. "My children and I need you," it says. "The red dragons will destroy us if we don't act soon. We must work together . . . come to Pirim. . . ." The image fades, and the PCs awaken simultaneously. If they exchange stories, they discover that they all experienced the identical dream. (Marlaine, a mature adult brass dragon living in the hill north of Pirim, is the source of the dream—see Chapter 3.)

Reminder: This encounter won't occur if the party has already been to Mt. Tamerlin (area 18). Grott takes one of the PCs aside and whispers in his ear. "Remember—it is urgent that you take me to Mt. Tamerlin. The day will come when you need my help." Fearing that Ella will overhear him, Grott will not elaborate.

Mysterious Travelers: Two hobgoblins approach the PCs from behind a grove of trees. One of them carries an old-looking sword with barbed notches on each end. They appear to be upset. "Please help us," says one. "We were searching for food in the trees when our father suddenly collapsed. He's not breathing. He might be dying!"

In fact, these are actually Sivak draconians who've been preying on hobgoblins and other travelers for several weeks. They recently went on a rampage in Grannin (area 10), killing dozens of hobgoblins and ravaging much of the village. The draconians have assumed the appearance of two of their most recent victims.

Sivak Draconians (2): AC 1; MV 6/15, Gl 18, Fl 24 (C); HD 6; hp 23, 20; THAC0 15; #AT 3 or 1; Dmg 1d6/1d6/2d6 (claws and tail) or by weapon (one is armed with a short sword that inflicts 1d6 points of damage, the other is armed with a Sivak-designed sword with barbed notches on each edge that inflicts 1d10 points of damage); SD +2 bonus to saves, can shapechange to the form of its victim (if victim was humanoid or its size or smaller; a Sivak is nine feet tall); if slain by a humanoid of its size or smaller, it shapechanges to the form of its slayer, remains in this form for three days, and then decomposes into black soot; if slain by a non-humanoid or humanoid larger than itself, the Sivak bursts into flame causing 2d4 points of damage to all within ten feet (no saving throw); MR 20%; AL NE

The story about the collapsed father is merely a ruse to lure the PCs into the woods so the draconians can attack them. If one or more of the PCs follow the draconians into the woods, the draconians revert to their natural forms and attack them. Likewise, if the PCs refuse to enter the woods, the draconians also attack. The draconians intend to kill the PCs first, then go after Ella and Grott (Ella and Grott head for cover during the battle). If both draconians lose half or more of their hit points, they try to fly away; as they make their escape attempt, a decorative metal band falls from one of their legs. The PCs can pursue the draconians if they wish; however, if the draconians are allowed to escape, they'll never be seen again.

The PCs may retrieve the metal leg band. It has a value of only two stl, but it can be presented in Grannin as proof of the draconians' defeat (see area 10).

3. Marak Valleys

A lush forest of tall trees and colorful wild flowers fills this area. If the PCs decide to enter the valley, Ella grumbles that it's out of the way and a waste of time, but she'll abide by their decision.

After the party has spent about an hour in the valley, a three-foot-tall humanoid wearing a gray shirt, heavy trousers, and leather moccasins bounds out of the brush and stands defiantly before the PCs. "State your names and your business in our valley," he says. "Be quick about it!"

Pickolus (Marak kender, 1st-level fighter): AC 10; MV 9; HD 1; hp 7; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 or by weapon (stonebow: range 4/8/12, dmg 1d4 + 1); SA taunt (distracting verbal abuse; any creature taunted for one full round must roll a successful saving throw vs. spell or attack wildly for 1d10 rounds with a –2 penalty to attack rolls and a +2 penalty to Armor Class); SD immune to all forms of fear; saving throws against spells and poisons gain a +4 bonus; AL LN

Pickolus is a member of a Marak kender tribe that resides in the village of Plundun. Pickolus has been observing the party as they've made their way through the valley. Satisfied that the party seems to pose no threat to the kender, Pickolus has decided to confront them directly and find out who they are and what they're doing here. Thirty of Pickolus's friends (use the same statistics as Pickolus) are hidden in the brush, keeping an eye on the PCs.

If the PCs don't answer, Pickolus again asks their names and their business in the valley. He accepts whatever they tell him. Since Ella and Grott remain silent, he asks the PCs to identify their silent companions; Pickolus again accepts whatever they tell him.

If the PCs attack Pickolus, he signals for his companions to join him from the brush. If the PCs continue to attack, the kender fight ferociously; they'd rather die than have hostile

intruders discover their village.

However, if the PCs are friendly and polite, the curious Pickolus invites them to be his guests in Plundun. Pickolus signals for his companions to join him, and 30 kender pour out of the brush.

If the PCs decline the invitation, Pickolus and the kender escort them to the valley border; the encounter is over. Otherwise, the kender accompany the party to Plundun (area 4), all the while annoying them with trivial questions. ("Where'd you get that sword?" "Do you trim your beard with a knife?" "Have you ever eaten dragon meat?" "Do you like black shoes?")

Proceed to area 4.

4. Plundun

Size: 110
Race: Marak Kender
Goods: See below
Law Level: See below

If the PCs haven't yet experienced the encounter in area 3, assume that Pickolus meets them at the outskirts of the village, and the encounter plays out as described in area 3.

Pickolus (see area 3) takes the party on a tour of Plundun, a village of simple shacks made of stone and thatch, some vegetable gardens, and a few small grain fields. Curious kender follow the party wherever they go and question them incessantly ("Where'd you get that shirt?" "Have you always worn your hair like that?"), while Pickolus provides rambling, pointless stories.

There is nothing of significance for sale in Plundun, and there is no formal government. If the PCs commit any crime (such as assaulting a kender), dozens of kender attack (use the kender statistics from area 3), chasing the party out of the village. If the PCs return to Plundun at a later date, they are chased away again.

If the PCs behave themselves, Pickolus takes them to his home and offers them a drink made from honey and vegetables. The rich drink is delicious and filling; one cup is as nutritious as a complete meal. Pickolus gives them a flask of the liquid as a gift (the flask contains 12 cups). Pickolus also invites the PCs to spend the night in the village. If they take him up on the offer, Pickolus provides them with their own shack and plenty to eat. When the party is ready to leave, Pickolus bids them farewell and tells them to have a safe journey.

Unknown to the party, Pickolus and the other kender have taken every opportunity to "handle" (that is, steal) their possessions. Unless a PC specifically states he is keeping a safe distance from the kender at all times, every party member is a potential victim of kender theft. Assume that each PC has a 70% chance of being a victim (though the kender won't attempt to handle an item from a PC kender); any PC so victimized has lost a coin bag, a small weapon, or other small item (of the DM's choice) to the kender. If the party spends the night in the village, this chance is raised to 85%. Ella and Grott are both victims; Grott loses his coin bag (containing 30 stl) and Ella loses her lucky dragon's tooth (sentimental value only).

Unless the PCs take an inventory of their possessions, it's unlikely that they discover their losses right away. If the PCs do discover their losses and confront the kender, the kender tell them they must have lost or misplaced the items and offer to help them look for them. (In fact, all handled items have been hidden away in hollow tree trunks, deep holes, and other inaccessible places; for every two hours a PC searches, he has a 20% chance of finding one of the party's handled items.)

5. Calament

Size: 1,200
Race: Kender
Goods: 200 gp
Law Level: 1

Calament is the largest village in the region and the best source of equipment and other goods. While the party explores the village, roll normally on the Village Encounter Table (Table 6).

After the party has been in the village for about an hour, they notice about 75 residents waiting in line to get into a cave. If the PCs ask a villager what he's doing, the villager explains, "There's a pond in the cave fed by an underground spring. Every few months, the spring washes up a special mixture of salts that gives the pond special healing powers."

If the PCs want to take a soak in the pond, they'll have to get in line and wait their turn (there's a two-hour wait). A PC who soaks in the pond feels remarkably refreshed and recovers 1-2 hit points. The effects of the pond can only be experienced once per week (assume the pond remains active for two weeks after the party's initial visit). Water taken from the pond loses its special properties.

6. Hurlock

Size: 900
Race: Kender
Goods: 100 gp
Law Level: 1

This kender community is similar to Calament, but it has fewer goods for sale. The citizens are generally indifferent to the PCs. While the party explores the village, roll normally on the Village Encounter Table (Table 6). After the party has been in Hurlock for about an hour, they'll notice a steady stream of residents leaving the village, heading in the direction of Calament (area 5). If asked, the residents say they're on their way to Calament (see area 5 for details).

Unless the PCs were brought to Hurlock by Milo Brownbrun (from the "Dragon Scholar" encounter in Encounter Zone 2), nothing special happens here (aside from the Village Encounter Table encounters).

If the party is in the company of Milo Brownbrun, Milo explains that the Calament healing pool has amazing restorative powers. "If you're under the weather, it might be worth your time to take a look." Milo then leads the PCs to his home, a small shack cluttered with books and parchments.

He selects several parchments from a large stack and studies them intently. "Just as I thought," he says. He pulls out a map (use the color fold-out map). "There is reason to believe that an active black dragon is either here [he points to Sargohgg—area 11] or here [he points to Grannin—area 10]. One or more active red dragons are either here [he points to Pirim—area 15] or here [he points to Kleeg—area 14]."

Milo has no other useful information for the party. He asks them if they intend to search for the dragons. If they indicate that they do, Milo tells them to wait. He rummages in a trunk and produces a ceramic flask of thick brown liquid. "This is a *potion of truth detection,* effective only on dragons," he says. "Take it as a gift, from one devotee of dragons to another." (A character who drinks the potion can determine if any statement a dragon makes is true or false. The potion lasts for 1-2 hours and is effective against all types of dragons. There are three doses in the flask.)

If the PCs ask Milo to accompany them, he declines, saying he has work to do here. If the PCs return to Hurlock at a later

date, Milo will be gone, continuing his research elsewhere in the Steamwall region.

7. Grobb

Size: 440
Race: Hobgoblin
Goods: 20 gp
Law Level: 2

The hobgoblins of Grobb are the mortal enemies of the hobgoblins of Agga (area 8). For decades, they have been engaged in a fierce conflict over the rights to a fresh water spring that runs between the villages. Each has spies in the enemy's village. All Grobb hobgoblins dress exclusively in dark brown clothing to distinguish themselves from their rivals.

If the PCs haven't been to Agga or if they haven't experienced the "Hobgoblin Gang" encounter in Encounter Zone 2, roll normally on the Village Encounter Table (Table 9). If the PCs speak with any of the residents, they'll be warned to stay out of Agga, "a village of pigs."

However, if the PCs have been to Agga or if they've experienced the "Hobgoblin Gang" encounter and didn't battle the Agga hobgoblins, within an hour after they enter Grobb, they are attacked by a gang of 2d4 hobgoblins (half are typical villagers, half are exceptional villagers). The attackers fight to the death, though they won't pursue the PCs if they leave the village. If the PCs remain in the village, or if they return later, don't roll for Village Encounters; instead, the PCs will be attacked repeatedly by similar gangs (the frequency of the attacks is up to the DM).

8. Agga

Size: 395
Race: Hobgoblin
Goods: 20 gp
Law Level: 2

The hobgoblins of Agga are the mortal enemies of the hobgoblins of Grobb (area 7). For decades, they have been engaged in a fierce conflict over the rights to a fresh water spring that runs between the villages. Each has spies in the enemy village. All Agga hobgoblins dress exclusively in dark green clothing to distinguish themselves from their rivals.

If the PCs haven't been to Grobb, if they haven't experienced the "Hobgoblin Gang" encounter in Encounter Zone 2, or if they experienced the "Hobgoblin Gang" encounter and didn't fight the hobgoblins, roll normally on the Village Encounter Table (Table 9). If the PCs speak with any of the residents, they'll be warned to stay out of Grobb, "A hole fit only for vermin."

However, if the PCs have been to Grobb, or if they've experienced the "Hobgoblin Gang" encounter and battled the Agga hobgoblins, within an hour after they enter Agga, they are attacked by a gang of 2d4 hobgoblins (half are typical villagers, half are exceptional villagers). The attackers fight to the death, though they won't pursue the PCs if they leave the village. If the PCs remain in the village, or if they return later, don't roll for Village Encounters; instead, the PCs will be attacked repeatedly by similar gangs (the frequency of the attacks is up to the DM).

9. Encounter Zone

The peaks of the Steamwall Mountains are from 1,000-4,000 feet above sea level. Many are dormant volcanoes; a few continue to belch smoke and ash at regular intervals. A greenish mist hangs over the mountains at all times, generated from the noxious steam rolling up from the Indanalis Sea that mixes with the volcanic gases.

When the party enters the area, roll 1d10 and immediately run the indicated encounter from Table 15. For every four game hours the party remains in this area, roll 1d6. On a roll or 5 or 6, another encounter on this list takes place (roll 1d10). You are free to alter the frequency or to choose specific encounters.

Table 15: Encounter Zone 9

D10 Roll	Encounter
1	Monster Attack
2	Overcast
3	Burning Rain
4	Pass
5	Windy Doom
6	Holy Woman
7	Rock Fall
8	Ash Eruption
9	Crack
10	Strange Trees

Table Notes:

Monster Attack: A monster leaps (or scuttles) from a concealed area (brush, cliff, or hole) and attacks the PCs. Grott and Ella take cover, relying on the PCs to defend them. Roll 1d4 or choose a specific monster: 1 = vultures, 2 = poisonous snake, 3 = cave bear, 4 = giant stag. (Note that the cave bear and giant stag have been altered by the Steamwall's noxious air and water.)

Vultures (2d4): AC 7; MV 3, Fl 24 (E); HD 2 + 1; hp 10 each; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4; AL N

Poisonous Snake: AC 5; MV 15; HD 4 + 2; hp 30; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 1d3 + poison; SA victim must roll a successful saving throw vs. poison or suffer an additional 2d6 points of damage; AL N

Cave Bear (with Steamwall modifications): AC 6; MV 6; HD 6 + 6; hp 35; THAC0 13; #AT 3; Dmg 1d8/1d8/2d6; SA hug (dmg 2d6 if preceded by paw hit with 18 or better), continues to fight for 1d4 melee rounds after reaching 0 to –8 hit points (at –9 or fewer hit points, it dies immediately); AL CN

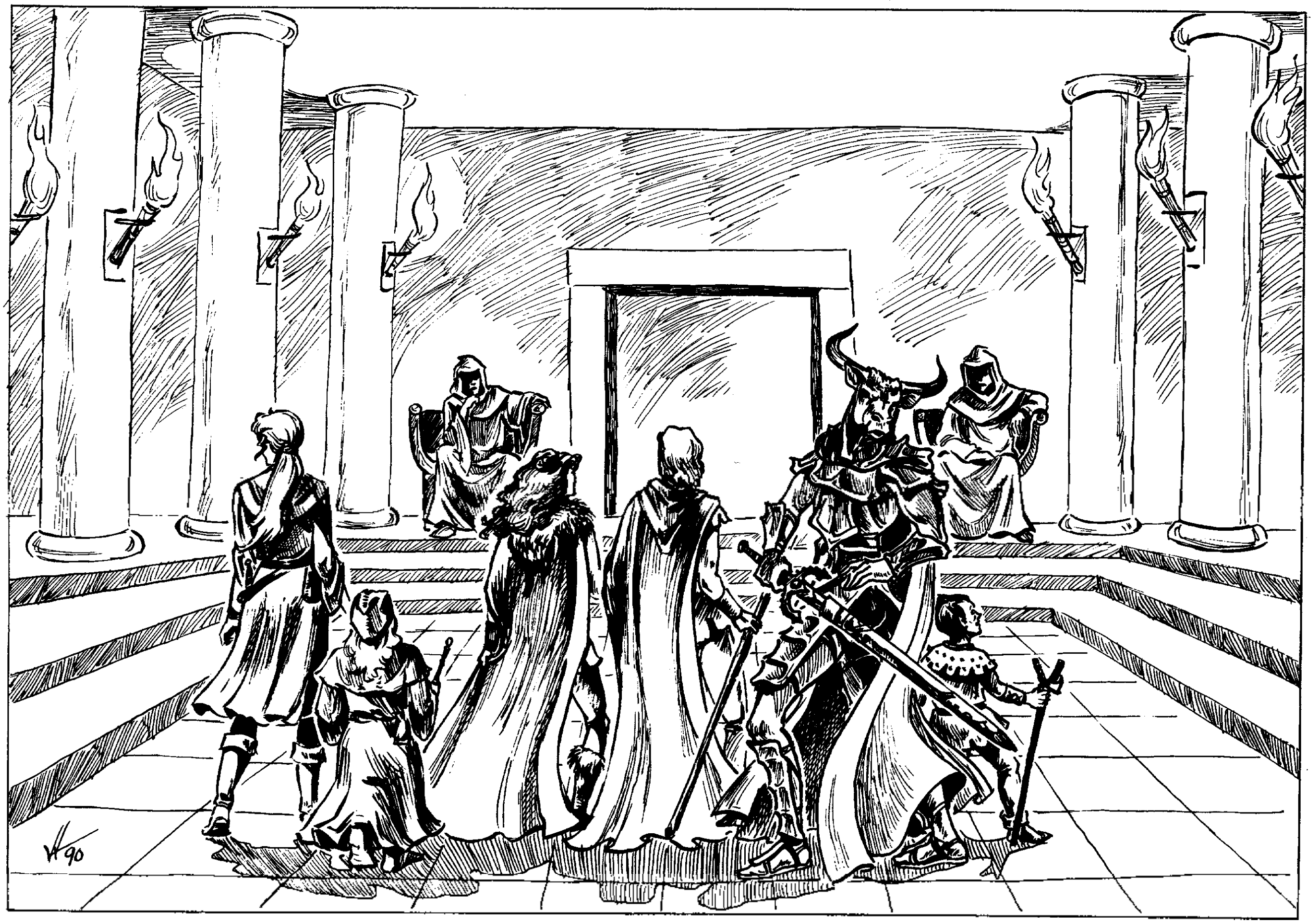
The bear is covered with ulcerous sores. He is slower than a normal bear and has long teeth similar to those of a sabre-tooth tiger.

Giant Stag (with Steamwall modifications): AC 7; MV 21; HD 5; hp 25; THAC0 15; #AT 1 or 2; Dmg 1d4/1d4 or 1d12; AL CN

The stag is covered with ulcerous sores. Instead of antlers, he has a single horn centered in his head, similar to that of a unicorn.

Overcast: The sky is cloudy all day and all night, preventing Grott from making a moon reading. Consequently, there will be no moon reading effects for the following day. (However, the DM should advance the moons on the Lunar Display Wheel as usual.)

Burning Rain: Rain begins to fall and persists for the next 2d4 hours. As in the "Light Rain" encounter in Encounter Zone 2, the rain has a greenish tinge and smells like rotten fish. However, the noxious mists of the Steamwall Mountains make the effects of the rain particularly severe. If a character is exposed to the rain for two consecutive hours, he must roll a Constitution check. If the check is successful, he feels sick to his stomach and suffers 1-2 points of damage. If the check fails, he feels sick to his stomach and experiences a throbbing headache; he suffers 2d4 points of damage and makes all attack rolls with a –2 penalty for the rest of the day.



Unless the party has a tent or tarpaulin, they'll have to seek shelter from the rain. Fortunately, the Steamwall Mountains provide plenty of natural cover. For every hour the party searches for shelter, there is a 50% chance that they discover a cave or rock outcropping that will keep them dry.

Pass: The party finds a mountain pass that makes travel easy. Roll 1d4 to find the length of the pass in miles (assume the pass goes in the direction the party is traveling). The party travels at its normal movement rate while following the pass.

Windy Doom: A strong wind blows a dense fog of noxious fumes over the party, a mixture of volcanic gases and foul mists from the Indanalis Sea. The PCs fall to their knees, coughing and gasping for 2d4 rounds. Each member of the party must roll a Constitution check. Those passing the check suffer 1-2 points of damage. Those failing the check suffer 2d4 points of damage and are inflicted with a strain of Indanalis fever. The fever persists for 3d4 days. Those inflicted with the fever suffer persistent nausea, headaches, and chills. They make all attack rolls and saving throws with a –2 penalty and lose 1 hit point per day. These hit points cannot be regained until the disease is cured or has run its course.

If the disease isn't cured, the afflicted characters recover after 3d4 days. However, each has permanently lost 1 point of Constitution (Constitution cannot be lowered below 3 as a result of the disease).

The disease can be cured only by a *cure disease* or *wish* spell. *Neutralize poison* and the various other *cure* spells have no effect, nor does a *potion of healing.* If it doesn't occur to the PCs, Grott suggests they check a village to see if an antidote is available. The results depend on the Law Level of the village:

Law Level 1: If the party tells any villager of their predicament, they are directed to the home of a local physician (use exceptional villager statistics) who provides them with an antidote, for which he refuses payment. The antidote has the additional benefit of inoculating the party against the worst effects of the fever (if the party experiences this encounter again, they suffer only the hit point loss). For that reason, the healthy party members might also wish to sample the antidote.

Law Level 2: If the party tells any villager of their predicament, they are directed to a local merchant who is willing to sell them an antidote for 10 stl per dose; the price is firm. If the PCs don't have the money to buy the antidote, they can take it by force (always resulting in the immediate execution of the Law Enforcement Routine), or they can steal it from his house at night (a 30% chance they're seen, resulting in the execution of the Law Enforcement Routine).

Law Level 3: The residents are utterly indifferent to the party's predicament. No antidote is available.

Holy Woman: The party sees a spiral of dark smoke rising over a hill. If the PCs investigate, they see a young woman (use typical human villager statistics; the woman is unarmed) dressed in a black robe and tending a large fire. A circle of stones surrounds the fire. The woman hums softly as she feeds the fire with small branches.

If the PCs speak to the woman or otherwise draw attention to themselves, she turns to them and smiles. "Join me in praise of Yerita," she says and hands them a fistful of branches. (Any PC who rolls a successful Wisdom check—or any PC with a proficiency in religion—recognizes Yerita as a name used by certain obscure cults to describe Lunais, the goddess of neutrality.)

If the PCs accept the branches and throw them into the fire, the woman says, "As the fires consume us, Yerita blesses this day." If the PCs don't accept the branches, the woman continues to hum and throw in her own branches. While the woman proceeds with her ritual, the PCs can question her. She identifies herself as Shurifa, a native of Ethany (area 22). If asked what she's doing, Shurifa explains that she is building fires in honor of Yerita throughout the Steamwall Mountains.

"It is required of all those who wish to serve in the temple of Horshah and Tirr." If asked about Horshah and Tirr, Shurifa identifies them as the rulers of Ethany. To all other questions, Shurifa answers, "You should ask Horshah and Tirr. They welcome questions of all kinds. There is nothing they do not know."

If this encounter occurs a second time, the PCs discover Shurifa's body next to one of her fires, a victim of one of the Steamwall Mountain monsters.

Rock Fall: The party approaches an area strewn with rubble and boulders, the result of a recent rock fall. They can look for an alternate route, which takes them 2d4 hours. If they don't look for an alternate route, roll 1d6. On a roll of 1-3, a rock fall occurs. Each character is attacked by four rocks per round for 1d4 rounds. Each rock attacks as a 5-HD monster and causes 1d4 points of damage. A character who rolls a successful Dexterity check suffers only half damage from each successful rock attack, but any rock that hits causes at least 1 point of damage.

Ash Eruption: The party hears a rumble in the distance and feels the earth shake; 2d4 rounds later, there is a violent explosion as a volcano erupts, spewing a shower of hot black ash over the entire area. If the PCs take cover or protect their exposed flesh when they hear the rumble (assume there is 15% chance of a cave or other natural shelter in the immediate area; characters can also cover themselves with a heavy cloak or blanket), they suffer no ill effects. Exposed characters suffer 1-2 points of heat damage and must roll a saving throw vs. breath weapon; those failing the saving throw suffer choking fits and an additional 1d4 points of damage.

Crack: The party's path is blocked by a long crack in the ground. The crack is 20 feet deep and about six feet wide; the sides of the crack are too sheer to climb. They can walk around it (which takes an extra hour). They can also cross over it by using a branch for a bridge (it takes 1-2 hours to find a suitable branch) or by jumping. A PC's base chance of jumping the crack is 65%; add 5% for each point of Dexterity over 10 to a maximum chance of 95%. Assume that Ella and Grott both make the jump. If a PC fails his jump, he can attempt a Dexterity check to grab the opposite side; otherwise, he falls into the crack and suffers 2d6 points of damage. His companions can pull him out with a rope or a branch.

Strange Trees: The party enters an area filled with trees of an unidentifiable variety. Their branches are twisted into spirals, and their trunks have huge bulging lumps. (The trees have been altered by the Steamwall's noxious air and water.) If any character intentionally touches a tree, he hears a moaning sound that seems to emanate from the bark. Ella claims the sound is only the wind, but no wind is blowing.

10. Grannin

Size: 190
Race: Hobgoblin
Goods: 5 gp
Law Level: 2

Roll normally on the Village Encounters Table (Table 9). Much of the village is in ruins, and many of the villagers are crippled and wounded. If the PCs ask any of the villagers what happened, they point to one of the many crude signs posted around the village. The signs feature crude drawings of two winged creatures resembling a cross between a humanoid and a dragon (any PC who rolls a successful Wisdom check recognizes these as drawings of draconians). One of the creature carries a huge sword with barbed notches on each edge. Below each drawing are the words, "Reward offered by Goth-Gar." (Any villager will tell the PCs that Goth-Gar is the chief of Grannin.)

If the PCs experienced the "Mysterious Travelers" encounter in Encounter Zone 2 and show evidence to any resident that they killed the draconians or drove them away (the metal leg band is sufficient evidence), they are granted an immediate audience with Goth-Gar (use hobgoblin chief statistics). Goth-Gar expresses his gratitude and rewards them with a chunk of jade worth 150 stl. If the PCs are brought before Goth-Gar at any time in the future as a result of a Law Enforcement Routine, he automatically dismisses the charges.

If the PCs haven't experienced the "Mysterious Travelers" encounter, they can visit Goth-Gar (any villager can point out where he lives) and offer to track down and destroy the draconians. Goth-Gar accepts their offer, and tells them where the draconians were last seen (an area about three miles west of the village). The PCs will have to track down the draconians in order to fight them; use the tracking rules on page 64 of the *Player's Handbook* (instead of using the modifiers on Table 39, assume there's a cumulative modifier of –4). If the party tracks down the draconians, they find them disguised as hobgoblins; go immediately to the "Mysterious Travelers" encounter in Encounter Zone 2. If the PCs fail to track the draconians or don't defeat them, there's no penalty. However, if they defeat them or drive them away, the party is rewarded as described above.

11. Sargohgg

Size: See Chapter 4
Race: Slig
Goods: Not applicable
Law Level: Not applicable

The village of Sargohgg is in a narrow valley surrounded by high mountains. When the PCs approach the village, go immediately to Chapter 4. When the party has completed the events of Chapter 4, the adventure resumes in this area.

12. Korchoch Stream

The Korchoch Stream has been thoroughly polluted by the Indanalis Sea. The water is greenish-gray and smells like rotten fish. Any character foolish enough to drink the water must roll a successful saving throw vs. poison or suffer 1d6 points of damage.

The party can avoid the stream by going around it. Alternatively, they can swim across it (the stream averages about ten feet deep) or wade through it (assume it takes 1-2 hours to find a sufficiently shallow area). Any character who swims, wades, or otherwise immerses himself in the stream must roll a successful Constitution check, or he will suffer headaches for the rest of the day, causing him to make all attacks with a –1 attack roll penalty.

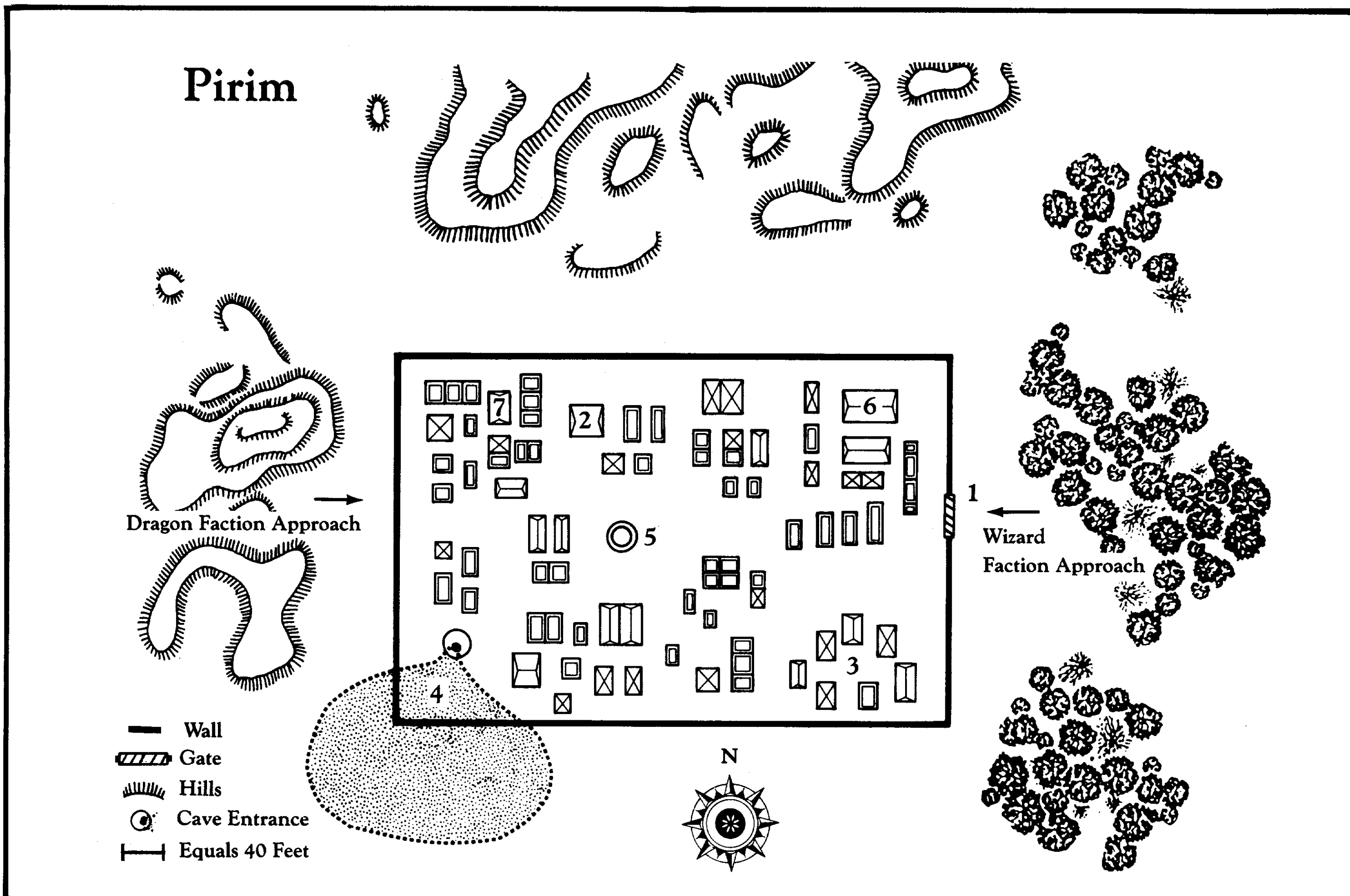
13. Daxack

Size: 120
Race: Hobgoblin
Goods: 5 gp
Law Level: 3

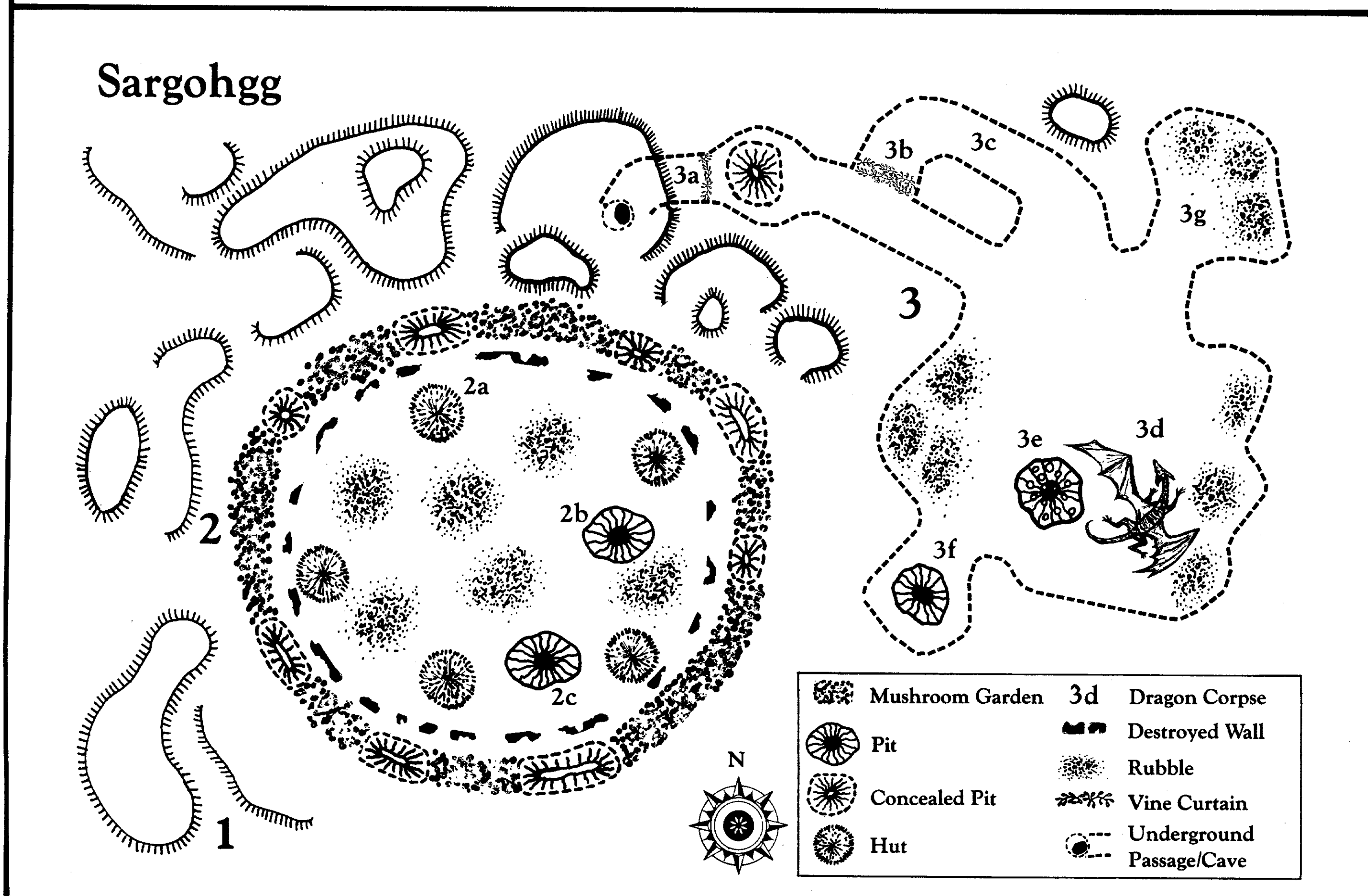
While the party explores Daxack, roll normally on the Village Encounter Table (Table 12). In any encounter that results in violence, including the Law Enforcement Routine, the hobgoblin forces are joined by 1d4 wild dogs that roam freely through the village. The dogs always fight to the death, even if the hobgoblins retreat.

Wild Dog: AC 7; MV 15; HD 1 + 1; hp 6; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4; AL N

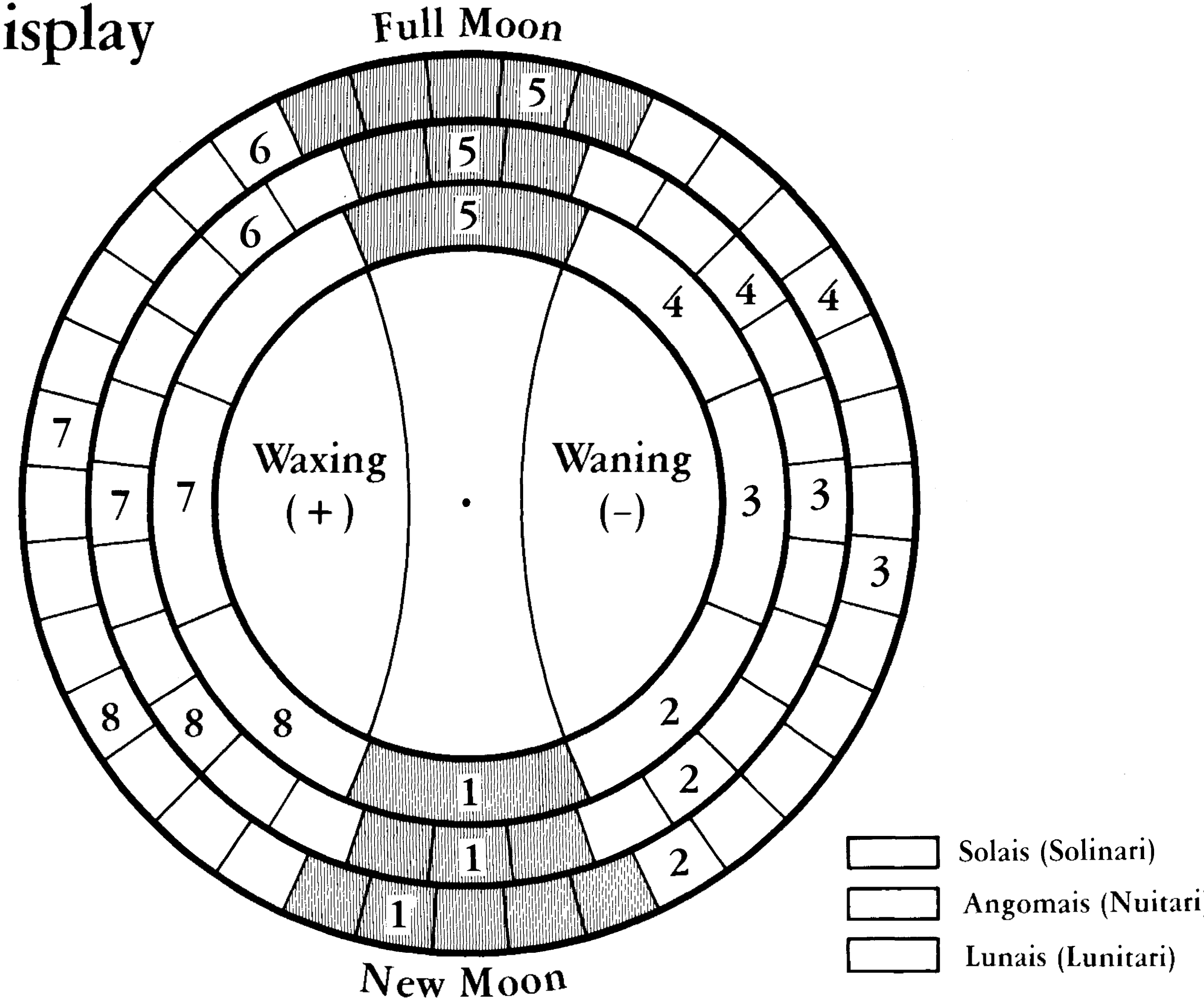
Pirim



Sargohgg



Lunar Display Wheel



MOON READING CHART

	SOL ◐ LUN ◑	SOL ◐ LUN ◐	SOL ◑ LUN ◐	SOL ◑ LUN ◑	SOL ◐ LUN ○	SOL ◑ LUN ○	SOL ○ LUN ◐	SOL ○ LUN ◑	SOL ○ LUN ○
ANG ○	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
ANG ◐	2	4	6	7	9	11	13	13	14
ANG ◑	3	5	6	8	10	12	13	13	15

○ = FULL MOON ANG = ANGOMAIS

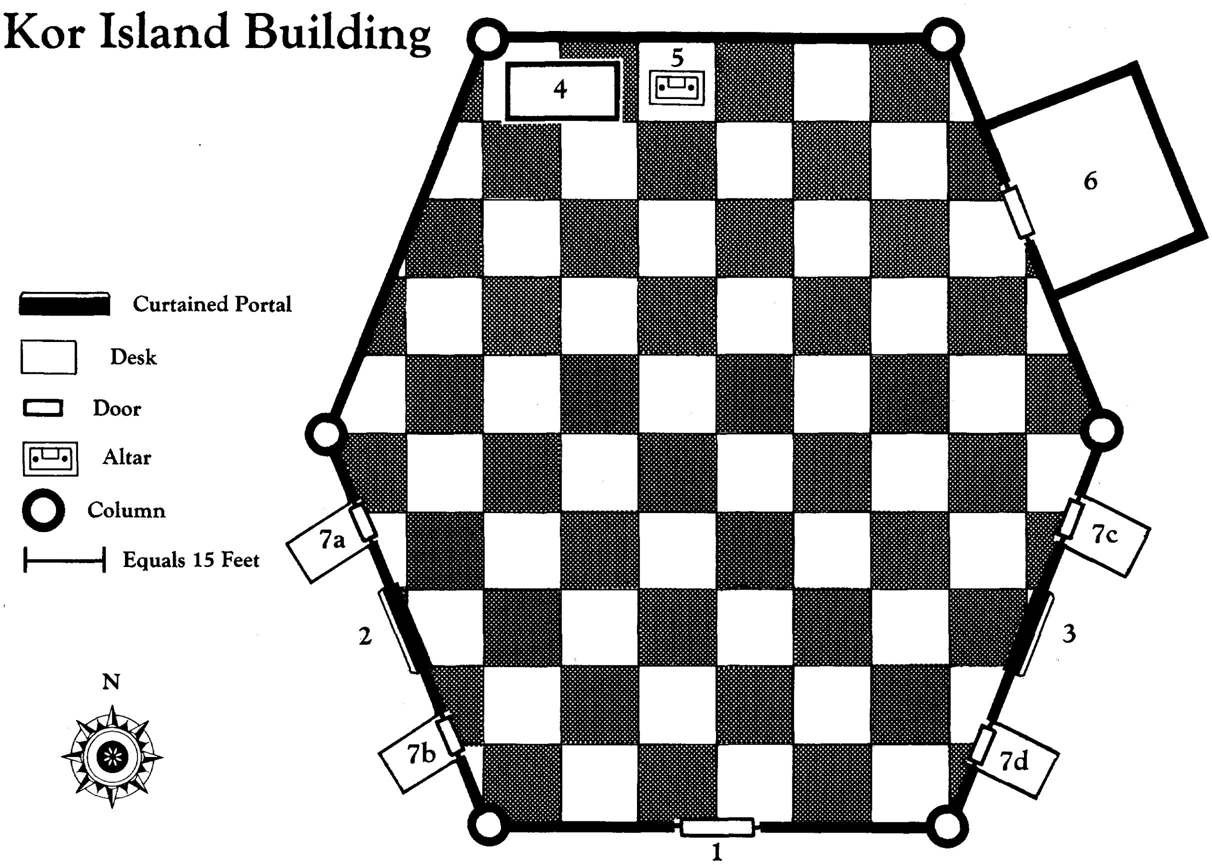
◐ = WAXING SOL = SOLAIS

◑ = WANING LUN = LUNAIS

WHEN ANY OF THE MOONS ARE NEW, THERE IS NO MOON READING.

SEE CHAPTER 2 FOR EXAMINATION OF READING NUMBERS.

Kor Island Building



Character ______________ Player ______________

Level ________

Alignment ________

Legionary of Erastas

Class: Fighter **Race: Minotaur, Human, Dwarf, or Elf**

Sex: Male **Homeland: Minotaur League**

ABILITIES

	STR	Hit Prob	Dmg Adj	Wgt Allow	Max Press	Op Drs	BB/ LG
	DEX	Rctn Adj		Missile Att Adj		Def Adj	
	CON	HP Adj	Sys Shk	Res Sur	Pois Save	Regen	
	INT	No of Lang	Spell Lvl	Lrn Sp	Spells/ Level	Spell Immun	
	WIS	Mag Def Adjus	Bonus Spells	Spell Fail	Spell Immun		
	CHR	Max No Hench	Loy Base	Rctn Adj			

To be a legionary for the Minotaur League is to be part of a justifiably proud military tradition. Each legion has a particularly identifying symbol and name; within each legion are separate units, each with their own titles, traditions, and history. A legionary character will probably want to specify his legion and unit titles, as well as a short history of their most glorious triumphs.

The core of the Emperor's army is its infantry, but there are also archers, mounted scouts, and cavalry, both light and heavy.

Legionaries must specialize in two weapons (of their choice). These should be related weapons, ones with which they trained extensively for their particular role in battle. Because of the intense training received in the army, these two specializations cost just three weapon proficiency slots (not four), total.

On the other hand, it is much more difficult to learn non-military skills while in the army. Any nonweapon proficiency not directly related to warfare (Gaming, for instance, or Animal Lore), costs one additional slot. Gaming costs two slots; Mining costs three. Of course, proficiencies learned after a former legionary's service is completed cost the regular rate.

And finally, one of the best reasons for a character to enter the Legions is seen when he leaves the service. As long as the soldier receives an honorable discharge, he receives a bonus, in stl, equal to half the experience points he earned while in uniform.

MOVEMENT

Base Rate

HIT POINTS

ARMOR

AC

SAVING THROWS

______	Paralyze/ Poison	○
______	Rod, Staff, or Wand	○
______	Petrify/ Polymorph	○
______	Breath Weapon	○
______ Modifier	Spells	○

Proficiencies/Skills/Languages

(SpW/2) (–/–)	(/)
(SpW/1) (–/–)	(/)
(Native L/0) (–/–)	(/)
	(/)
	(/)
	(/)
	(/)
	(/)
	(/)

Character ______________ Player ______________

Level ________

Alignment ________

Dragon Knight

Class: Fighter or Fighter (Mage) **Race: Human, Elf, or Half-Elf**

Sex: Male or Female **Homeland: ________**

ABILITIES

	STR	Hit Prob	Dmg Adj	Wgt Allow	Max Press	Op Drs	BB/ LG
	DEX	Rctn Adj		Missile Att Adj		Def Adj	
	CON	HP Adj	Sys Shk	Res Sur	Pois Save	Regen	
	INT	No of Lang	Spell Lvl	Lrn Sp	Spells/ Level	Spell Immun	
	WIS	Mag Def Adjus	Bonus Spells	Spell Fail	Spell Immun		
	CHR	Max No Hench	Loy Base	Rctn Adj			

Dragon knights come from all classes of society, yet have two things in common—love and respect for the great winged creatures with whom they share their lives. A dragon knight has a minimum Intelligence of 12, Wisdom of 12, and Charisma of 12. Characters less intelligent, insightful, or charming than this are simply not tolerated in a long-term friendship by the Othlorx. Not even all so qualified are accepted as knights. Each applicant must find a dragon who is willing to train him and become his partner for life.

Since nearly all dragon knights began adventuring as some other type of character, most will be dual-class. Even elves and half-elves may make this switch; this is an exception to the general dual-class rule. Similarly, if a human began adventuring as a mage, he may become a dragon knight with the special ability to learn and cast wizardly spells. He will probably learn the spells his dragon knows, plus the special dragon knight spells, once he is experienced enough to do so.

Given the wide range of their background, dragon knights begin with no specific skills or proficiencies. However, as a knight advances in experience, he acquires an increasing number of abilities automatically.

The highest level of experience which dragon knights can achieve is the twelfth.

MOVEMENT

Base Rate

HIT POINTS

ARMOR

AC

SAVING THROWS

______	Paralyze/ Poison	○
______	Rod, Staff, or Wand	○
______	Petrify/ Polymorph	○
______	Breath Weapon	○
______ Modifier	Spells	○

Proficiencies/Skills/Languages

	(/)
	(/)
	(/)
	(/)
	(/)
	(/)
	(/)
	(/)
	(/)

I4. KLEEG

Size: 390
Race: Hobgoblin
Goods: 10 gp
Law Level: 2

The hobgoblin village of Kleeg is ruled by a human mage named Jajaj, who fled here from Kristophan a decade ago when his ill-conceived plot to loot the city treasury was discovered by the authorities. The hobgoblins, intimidated by his magical skills, serve him faithfully.

An hour after they arrive in Kleeg, a militia group intercepts the party and politely requests that they come with them "to see the king." If the PCs resist, enough hobgoblins appear to convince them otherwise. The hobgoblins take the party to the largest building in the village where they are met by a thin man with a bald head and narrow eyes. He wears a flowing silken cloak. He introduces himself as Jajaj, "king of Kleeg."

Jajaj (7th-level human mage): AC 10; MV 12; hp 20; THAC0 18; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4 (dagger) or spells; Str 8, Dex 7, Con 7, Int 14, Wis 11, Cha 13; AL NE

Spells: 1st Level— *magic missile, mending, read magic, spider climb;* 2nd Level— *stinking cloud* x 2, *invisibility;* 3rd Level— *gust of wind x 2, fireball;* 4th Level— *ice storm*

Jajaj asks the party their names and their business in Kleeg. "I assume you have no association with the dogs of Pirim, am I correct?" Satisfied that the PCs aren't Pirim allies, he apologizes for the inconvenience but says his soldiers have orders to bring all strangers in for questioning. "Pirim spies are everywhere." He wishes them a pleasant stay in Kleeg, then dismisses them. The PCs may explore Kleeg if they wish; roll normally on the Village Encounter Table (Table 9). The PCs can speak with Jajaj again if they wish, but he engages in only the most innocuous small talk and has no useful information for them.

Note to the DM: As will be seen, Jajaj may be killed or arrested after the events of the Chapter 3. If this happens and the PCs return to Kleeg when Jajaj is no longer in town, assume that Kleeg has reverted to Law Level 3 and roll for encounters accordingly.)

I5. PIRIM

Size: 610
Race: Human
Goods: 25 gp
Law Level: 1

Pirim is completely surrounded by a high wooden wall. When the PCs approach the village, go immediately to Chapter 3. When the party has completed the events of Chapter 3, the adventure resumes in this area.

I6. HYRUTE STREAM

Like the Korchoch Stream (area 12), the Hyrute Stream has been thoroughly polluted by the Indanalis Sea. Both streams present identical obstacles for the party (see area 12 for details).

I7. GRATCH

Size: 105
Race: Hobgoblin
Goods: 5 gp
Law Level: 3

While the party explores Gratch, roll normally on the Village Encounter Table (Table 12). However, all of the hobgoblins seems unusually sluggish. If asked about this, they refuse to comment. (A few days ago, a noxious fog settled over the village, leaving everyone nauseated and weak.) In any situation calling for a Law Enforcement Routine, roll 1d6. On a roll of 1-4, the Law Enforcement Routine is executed normally; on a roll of 5-6, nothing happens. During all hobgoblin attacks, the hobgoblins suffer a –1 penalty to both attack and damage rolls.

I8. MOUNT TAMERLIN

Mt. Tamerlin is the largest active volcano in the southern Steamwall region. It is a towering peak of solid rock nearly 4,000 feet tall. Thick smoke spirals steadily from its cone, and black ridges of hardened lava twist down its slopes like immense serpents. This is where Grott has been nagging the party to take him (see the "Restless Night" encounter in Chapter 1 and the "Reminder" encounter in Encounter Zone 2).

When the party is within 200 yards of the volcano, Grott takes one of the PCs aside and whispers, "Wait here. I'll be back soon. Keep Ella away from me. Under no circumstances are you to interrupt the ritual." With that, Grott leaves the party, walking determinedly toward the peak. Ella watches with interest, but says nothing, assuming that Grott is carrying out some kind of reconnaissance mission for the PCs.

Eventually, Grott reaches the base of the volcano. He sits on the ground, crosses his legs, and stares at the volcano, his back to the party. The party can see him clearly.

Events occur in the sequence described below. Throughout, Grott remains still, deep in meditation. If Ella or the PCs interrupt his meditation, most likely by picking him up or otherwise retrieving him, go to the "Interruption" section. If they allow Grott to complete his ritual, go to the "Completion" section.

1. About 20 minutes after Grott has settled into position, Ella grows restless. She demands that the PCs explain what's going on. The PCs can tell her whatever they like, but they'll have to tell her something or she becomes increasingly angry. As soon as the PCs offer an explanation, she settles down, but remains anxious.

2. After an hour has passed, Ella says she's going to retrieve Grott. "I've had enough of this nonsense," she fumes, and begins to walk toward Grott. She ignores any comments from the PCs; if they want to prevent her from interrupting Grott, they'll have to physically stop her. If the PCs take no actions, Ella stomps up to Grott, lifts him up and tucks him under one arm, then hauls him away from the volcano; proceed to the "Interruption" section. If the PCs attempt to physically stop Ella, she loses her temper and attacks them. Ella attacks for three rounds before she settles down (at the DM's discretion, Ella settles down more quickly). "This is a waste of time," she mumbles and sits down on a rock to wait for Grott.

3. After two hours have passed, the volcano begins to rumble. Moderate tremors shake the ground, and small ash clouds puff from the cone. "The volcano's about to erupt," says Ella matter-of-factly. "If Grott dies, it'll be your fault." Ella takes cover beneath a rock ledge.

4. After three hours have passed, the volcano erupts, spewing a shower of semi-hardened magma blobs in a 300-yard radius. All exposed characters have a 10% chance of being hit by a magma blob and suffering 2d6 points of burn and impact damage (Ella is protected from the magma by the rock ledge; the debris misses Grott).

A single river of lava, about 50 yards wide, gurgles from the cone, flowing directly toward Grott. The red-hot lava incinerates all vegetation and other combustible material in its path. The lava flows very slowly; assume it will take two hours to reach Grott. Ella orders the PCs to rescue Grott, but she takes no hostile actions if they don't.

The temperature within 100 yards of the lava flow is about 30 degrees hotter than normal. The temperature increase is significantly higher in close proximity to the lava; any character within 50 yards of the lava suffers 1d4 points of heat damage per round of exposure (Grott, however, is immune to the effects of the heat—see his NPC description in the Appendix for details). Any character in contact with the lava suffers 4d6 points of damage per round (again, Grott is immune).

5. About two hours after the volcano erupts, Ella panics; the lava flow is less than 50 yards away from Grott. "Save him!" she screams. "If you don't, his blood will be on your hands!"

If the PCs take no actions, the lava continues to stream toward Grott. When the lava is about 20 yards away from him, Grott rises to his feet and moves quickly to rejoin the PCs. "Why are you all standing here?" he asks. "Don't you see the lava? Let's get out of here!" The lava flow moves so slowly that it's easy to avoid; proceed to the "Completion" section.

Interruption

Grott remains in a lifeless trance for 15 minutes after he is removed from his position near the base of the volcano. "What did you do that for?" Ella shrieks at Grott. "Are you out of your mind? "I'm sorry," Grott says weakly. "It was foolish of me. It won't happen again."

As soon as he gets a chance, Grott approaches the PCs. He can barely contain his fury. "I trusted you," he hisses. "You betrayed me. I will not be able to attempt the ritual for another year and must therefore remain unclean. Don't ever expect any help from me."

Completion

"What did you do that for?" shrieks Ella as the party moves away from the volcano to avoid the lava. "Are you out of your mind? "I'm sorry I frightened you," says Grott, "but as I explained earlier, it is a necessary cleansing ceremony. I feel much better."

As soon as he gets a chance, Grott approaches the PCs. "Thank you for bringing me here," he says. "I will not forget this favor."

If the PCs ask Grott what the ceremony was all about, Grott explains that it is an annual ritual practiced by the clerics of Angomeith. "It is a test of faith; those who pass the test are spiritually cleansed."

19. Agorham

Size: 425
Race: Hobgoblin
Goods: 10 gp
Law Level: 1

Roll normally on the Village Encounter Table (Table 6) while the party explores Agorham. The party will find the hobgoblin residents to be unusually friendly and somewhat sluggish; all Agorham hobgoblins make their attacks with a –1 penalty to both attack and damage rolls.

The Steamwall stream providing drinking water for the village is polluted with an unusual combination of mineral salts, volcanic discharge, and contaminated rain from clouds blown in from the Indanalis. The water acts as a drug, keeping the hobgoblins constantly listless. If a party member eats any of the food or drinks any of the water from the village, he feels drowsy immediately afterward. If he rolls a successful saving throw vs. poison, he suffers no ill effects. If he fails the throw, he suffers a –1 penalty to his attack and damage rolls for the rest of the day.

20. Saddlerock

Size: 350
Race: Fianawar (dwarf)
Goods: 25 gp
Law Level: 2

Named for an unusual rock formation near the outskirts of the village, Saddlerock is the only Fianawar community of any consequence in the southern Steamwall region. Like the Fianawar villages in the north, Saddlerock is built close to a cliff wall. The squat homes are constructed of stone blocks with sod roofs.

While the party explores the village, roll normally on the Village Encounter Table (Table 9). Generic statistics for the Saddlerock villagers are listed below.

After the party has been in the village for about an hour, they are approached by two gray-bearded dwarves (use exceptional villager statistics; each is armed with a Saddlerock short sword, described in Table 16). The dwarves introduce themselves as Irwick and Rudman Glazepick, "the finest weaponsmiths in all of Saddlerock." The dwarves offer to manufacture weapons and armor for the party "at very reasonable prices." If the party declines, the dwarves shrug and walk away. If the party expresses interest, the dwarves tell them what they have for sale, the prices, and how long it takes to manufacture each item (see Table 16).

Table 16: Saddlerock Weapons

Weapon	Base Damage	Damage Bonus *	Price **	Days To Make †
Dagger (engraved with owner's name)	1d4	0	3 stl	1
Saddlerock short sword	1d6	+ 1	24 stl	2
Saddlerock leaf-headed boar spear	1d8	+ 1	48 stl	4
Giant-Killer (two-handed sword)	1d10	+ 2	120 stl	6

* Each weapon is designed to perfectly compliment the owner's musculature, hand-size, grip strength, and other physical factors. When the owner uses the weapon, he gains the damage bonus; when another character uses the weapon, the weapon inflicts the base damage.

** Prices are not negotiable.

† This is how long it takes lrwick and Rudman to make each individual item. For instance, if the party orders three Saddlerock short swords, it takes six days to complete the order.

If the party is concerned about the weaponsmiths' reputation, any villager will confirm that Irwick and Rudman are scrupulously honest and superb craftsmen. If the party wishes to make a purchase, the dwarves insist on 1/3 of the price of each weapon as a deposit. The party can wait in Saddlerock while the dwarves work on the weapons, or they can return to the village later to pick up their order.

Typical Villager (0-level Fianawar dwarf): AC 10; MV 6; hp 4; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4 (dagger); SA and SD all of the special abilities of dwarves listed in the *Player's Handbook* (see also pages 82-83 of the *Guide Book to Taladas* in the *Time of the Dragon* boxed set); AL LN

Exceptional Villager (2nd-level Fianawar dwarf fighter): AC 4 (chain mail and shield); MV 6; hp 10; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 (short sword); SA and SD all of the special abilities of dwarves listed in the *Player's Handbook* (see also pages 82-83 of the Guide Book to Taladas in the *Time of the Dragon* boxed set); AL LN

21. Encounter Zone

This area is physically similar to Encounter Zone 2. When the party enters the area, roll 1d10 and immediately run the indicated encounter on Table 17. For every four game hours the party remains in this area, roll 1d6. On a roll or 5 or 6, another encounter on this list takes place (roll 1d10). You are free to alter the frequency or to choose specific encounters as you see fit.

Table 17: Encounter Zone 21

D10 Roll	Encounter
1	Encounter Zone 2
2	Monster Attack
3	Poison Rain
4	Thick Fog
5	Dragon Sighting
6	Clutching Weeds
7	Shallow Swamp
8-9	Old Friends
10	Corpse

Table Notes:

Encounter Zone 2: Roll for an encounter on the Encounter Zone 2 table (Table 14) or treat as no encounter.

Monster Attack: A monster leaps (or scuttles) from a concealed area (brush, cliff, or hole) and attacks the PCs. Grott and Ella take cover, relying on the PCs to defend them. Roll 1d4 or choose a specific monster: 1 = skyfisher, 2 = giant black squirrels, 3 = megalo-centipede, 4 = giant ram. (Note that the squirrels, megalo-centipede, and giant ram have been altered by the Steamwall's noxious air and water.)

Skyfisher: AC 3; MV 3, Fl 24 (C); HD 4; hp 18; THAC0 17; #AT 1 or 2; Dmg 3d4 or 1d6/1d6; SA dive for first attack, gaining a +2 to its attack roll and doubling the damage inflicted; each time it hits with its claws, victim must roll a Dexterity check to avoid the bird's grip (gripped victim is carried aloft for 1d4 rounds and dropped; damage from the fall is 1d6 points of damage per round aloft); AL N

Giant Black Squirrels (2d4; with Steamwall modifications): AC 6; MV 12; HD 1 + 1; hp 6 each; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d3; AL CN

The squirrels' heads are bare skulls with blazing red eyes. Their bodies are covered with ulcerous sores.

Megalo-Centipede (with Steamwall modifications): AC 5; MV 18; Fl 18 (C); HD 3; hp 17; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6; AL CN

The centipede has two huge leathery wings that enable it to fly. It has longer and sharper fangs than a normal megalo-centipede, but its bite isn't poisonous.

Giant Ram (with Steamwall modifications): AC 6; MV 15; HD 4; hp 20; THAC0 17; #AT 1 or 2; Dmg 2d6 (horns) or 1d4/1d4 (claws); AL CN

The ram is covered with ulcerous sores. It has a single eye centered in its head and has long claws on its front feet.

Poison Rain: Rain begins to fall and persists for the next 2d4 hours. As in the "Light Rain" encounter in Encounter Zone 2, the rain has a greenish tinge and smells like rotten fish. However, this rain is poisonous. If a character is exposed to the rain for two consecutive hours, he must roll a saving throw vs. poison. If the roll is successful, he suffers no damage. If the roll fails, he receives 1d4 points of damage and suffers a –2 attack roll penalty for the rest of the day.

Thick Fog: A thick fog settles over the party, extending to a radius of 1d4 miles. The greenish fog has no ill effects other than reducing vision to 50 yards. (If this encounter occurs at night, vision is reduced to ten yards.) While traveling in the fog, the party's movement rate is cut in half.

There is also a chance that the PCs lose track of their compass directions. On a roll of 1 or 2 on 1d4, they've lost their way. Roll 1d8 to determine a random direction (1 = N, 2 = NE, 3 = E, and so on). The party heads 1d4 miles in the indicated direction. If the PCs cast *find the path* or a similar spell, or if they're able to dispel the fog, they won't become lost.

Dragon Sighting: This encounter occurs only at night; it won't occur if the party has already experienced the events of Chapter 3. A PC looking into the sky sees six small copper dragons soaring high overhead, heading in the direction of Pirim (area 15). The dragons are too fast and too far away for the party to contact or follow. (These are the children of Marlaine, searching the area for the red dragons menacing Pirim—see Chapter 3.)

Clutching Weeds: The PCs approach a field of waist-high black weeds. The PCs can avoid the weed field by looking for an alternate route, which takes an extra 1-2 hours. If they walk through the field, the weeds clutch and grab at them, but the party suffers no harm. (The weeds have been modified by the noxious Steamwall air and water.)

Shallow Swamp: The PCs approach a vast swampy area, containing several inches of standing water. The water is greenish in color and smells like rotten fish. The PCs can avoid the swampy area by looking for an alternate route, which takes an extra 1d4 hours. All characters who walk through the swamp must roll a Constitution check; those who fail suffer 1-2 points of damage from exposure to the noxious water. (Assume that both Ella and Grott make successful saving throws.)

Old Friends: A fat man in plate mail wearing a black eye patch steps from behind a tree and confronts the party, blocking their progress. A moment later, he is joined by a dark-haired female half-elf, a barbarian with a shaved head and a single long braid dangling down his back, a fair-haired warrior in banded mail, a bull minotaur, and a lanky humanoid lizard. "At last we've caught up with you," hisses the fat man. The party recognizes him as Sanch Garax. His companions are Hol Horth, Shedra, Cha't Irs, Brutax, and Zaz. (See the "Hosk Mercenaries" section of Chapter 1 for statistics. If any of the Mercenaries died in Chapter 1, assume the survivors have recruited exceptional hobgoblins to replace them. If Sanch died in Chapter 1, a mercenary of the DM's choice has replaced him as leader.)

Sanch says the mercenaries have been tracking the party for days. "Tired of these amateurs yet?" he asks Ella. "We're here to take over."

If Ella hasn't been particularly satisfied with the PCs' performance so far (for instance, if they failed to recover the dragon ears in Chapter 3, 4, or 5), she thinks for a moment, then tells the party, "If you want to keep your jobs, you'll have to fight for them." The mercenaries attack the PCs while Ella and Grott watch; the battle plays out as described below.

If Ella has been satisfied with the PCs' performance (for instance, if they've recovered the dragon ears whenever they've had the opportunity in Chapters 3, 4, and 5), she tells the mercenaries to leave. The furious mercenaries attack the party anyway. Ella and Grott watch; if the mercenaries are skilled enough to destroy the PCs, reasons Ella, they deserve to be her employees instead of the PCs.

If the party hasn't yet been to Mt. Tamerlin (area 18), Grott does nothing before the battle begins. If the party has been to

Mt. Tamerlin and the PCs allowed Grott to complete his ceremony, Grott secretly casts *bless* on all the PCs prior to the beginning of the battle; if the PCs interrupted Grott before he finished his ceremony, he casts *curse* on them. (Ella is too preoccupied to notice Grott casting his spell.)

The mercenaries intend to attack until all of the PCs are dead. However, when all of the mercenaries have lost at least half of their hit points, the surviving mercenaries stop fighting and flee into the wilderness. The PCs may pursue if they wish, though Ella will tell the PCs to let them go. "They're like scared children. I doubt if we'll see them again." (She's right.)

This encounter occurs only once.

Corpse: The party discovers the corpse of a human explorer, killed by the monsters of the Steamwall. If the PCs search the corpse, they discover a bag with 36 stl, a *dagger +1,* and a map of the Steamwall region. The map has a large X on it. Beside the X is a symbol for money (the Taladas equivalent of a dollar sign).

(Point out the location of the X on the color fold-out map; the X corresponds to area 23.)

This encounter occurs only once.

22. Ethany

Size: 375
Race: Human
Goods: 25 gp
Law Level: 1

Ethany was settled about 30 years ago by a married couple named Tirr and Horshah, devotees of the goddess Yerita (a name used by obscure cults to describe Lunais, the goddess of neutrality). Tirr and Horshah received a dream instructing them to establish a settlement in the Steamwall Mountains with themselves as leaders.

Roll normally on the Village Encounter Table (Table 6) while the party explores Ethany. Shortly after the PCs enter the village, they spot a large building with polished stone walls and an oaken stairway leading to the front door. Any villager can identify the building as the home of the Ethany leaders, Tirr and Horshah. If the party enters the building, they see an elderly man and woman dressed in black robes seated on oaken chairs on a raised dais. A dozen villagers armed with bows (use exceptional villager statistics) stand guard along the walls. If the PCs take any hostile actions against the elderly couple, the guards attack; assume the guards can summon dozens of reinforcements if necessary.

The couple identify themselves as Tirr and Horshah, the rulers of Ethany. They ask the PCs their names and homelands and wish them a pleasant stay in the village. If the PCs have any questions, they're interrupted by a guard. "Tirr and Horshah are seers," he says. "If you wish information from them, you must first make an offering."

Tirr and Horshah have exceptional divination skills, but they don't work for free. If the PCs have a question that can be answered with a "yes" or "no," Tirr and Horshah will divine the answer if they receive an offering of at least 10 stl or its equivalent in equipment. If a PC makes an appropriate offering and asks a question, Tirr and Horshah place their palms together, stare into each other's eyes for a moment, then announce their answer.

To determine the answer, roll 1d6. On a roll of 1-3, the couple gives the correct answer. On a roll of 4-6, the couple says the answer is unclear and suggest they ask again some other time (this response is given automatically if the DM isn't sure how to answer the question). The couple will make up to three attempts per day to answer questions.

23. Cave

A five-foot-diameter opening partially concealed by brush leads to a 15-foot-diameter cave; the party is most likely to discover the cave as a result of the map from the "Corpse" encounter in Encounter Zone 21.

A small hobgoblin village located about 100 yards north used to store treasure in the cave. About a year ago a rock slide buried the village, killing everyone in it. Their treasure remains hidden in this cave.

A cave bear now lives here. The bear has been modified by the Steamwall's noxious air and water. It is covered with ulcerous sores and is slower than a normal bear. It also has a fifth clawed paw extending from the center of its head.

Cave Bear (with Steamwall modifications): AC 6; MV 6; HD 6 + 6; hp 31; THAC0 13; #AT 4; Dmg 1d8/1d8/1d8/1d12; SA hug (dmg 2d6 if preceded by paw hit with 18 or better), continues to fight for 1d4 melee rounds after reaching 0 to –8 hit points (at –9 or fewer hit points, it dies immediately); AL CN

As soon as the party approaches the mouth of the cave, the bear charges out and attacks. The bear fights to the death, pursuing if necessary. If the party defeats the bear, they can search the cave to discover 260 stl, 15 obsidian chunks worth 10 stl each, four amber chunks worth 80 stl each, and a pure black pearl worth 230 stl.

24. Stotta

Size: 245
Race: Hobgoblin
Goods: 5 gp
Law Level: 3

Roll normally on the Village Encounter Table (Table 12) while the party explores Stotta. All the residents have pocked and ulcerated skin, thanks to the contaminated water and noxious gases prominent in this area. The water and food in the village smells like rotten fish; should a character eat or drink any of it, he must roll a successful saving throw vs. poison or suffer 1 point of damage.

25. Prerge

Size: 510
Race: Hobgoblin
Goods: 10 gp
Law Level: 3

Roll normally on the Village Encounter Table (Table 12) while the party explores Prerge. Like the residents of Stotta, all of the Prerge hobgoblins have pocked and ulcerated skin. However, the pollution is even more severe in Prerge; there is a 30% chance that any given resident has skin that oozes poison capable of affecting non-residents. Any party member coming in physical contact with a Prerge hobgoblin must roll a successful saving throw vs. poison or suffer 1 point of damage. The water and food in the village smells like rotten fish; should a character eat or drink any of it, he must roll a successful saving throw vs. poison or suffer 1 point of damage.

Near the center of the village is an abandoned shack made of red stones. If the PCs examine the shack (most likely because they were sent here as a result of the "Hobgoblin Exiles" encounter in Encounter Zone 27), they see a dirt pile in the northwestern corner. Beneath the dirt pile is 105 stl, four turquoise chunks worth 20 stl each, and an emerald worth 500 stl. This is the treasure of Hortt (see the "Hobgoblin Exiles" encounter in Encounter Zone 27).

26. Tyaru

Size: 190
Race: Hobgoblin
Goods: 5 gp
Law Level: 2

Roll normally on the Village Encounter Table (Table 9) while the party explores Tyaru. Law enforcement is somewhat more anarchic here than is typical of a Law Level 2 village; when a Law Enforcement Routine is required, use the Law Level 3 routine instead of the Law Level 2 routine.

27. Encounter Zone

The physical features of this area are similar to those of Encounter Zone 9. When the party enters the area, roll 1d8 and immediately run the indicated encounter from Table 18. For every four game hours the party remains in this area, roll 1d6. On a roll or 5 or 6, another encounter on this list takes place (roll 1d8). You are free to alter the frequency or to choose specific encounters as you see fit.

Table 18: Encounter Zone 27

D8 Roll	Encounter
1-2	Encounter Zone 9
3	Monster Attack
4	Steam Chasm
5	Gas Eruption
6	Mud Pit
7	Corpses
8	Hobgoblin Exiles

Table Notes:

Encounter Zone 9: Roll for an encounter on the Encounter Zone 9 table (Table 15).

Monster Attack: A monster leaps (or scuttles) from a concealed area (brush, cliff, or hole) and attacks the PCs. Grott and Ella take cover, relying on the PCs to defend them. Roll 1d4 or choose a specific monster: 1 = two-headed giant poisonous snake, 2 = giant weasel, 3 = warthogs, 4 = giant eagle. (Note that all of the monsters have been altered by the Steamwall's noxious air and water.)

Two-headed Giant Poisonous Snake (with Steamwall modifications): AC 5; MV 9, HD 6 + 1; hp 25; THAC0 15; #AT 3; Dmg 1d4/1d4/2d4; SA constriction and poison (victim failing to roll a successful saving throw vs. poison suffers an additional 2d6 points of damage); AL CN

The snake is 30 feet long and has two five-foot-long necks, each ending in a head with long fangs.

Giant Weasel (with Steamwall modifications): AC 3; MV 15; HD 3 + 3; hp 21; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 2d6; SA drains blood for 2d6 points of damage per round; AL CN

The giant weasel has bony plates covering its body. Its fur has fallen out in patches, revealing areas of ulcerous sores.

Warthog (1d4; with Steamwall modifications): AC 7; MV 18; HD 3; hp 15 each; THAC0 17; #AT 2; Dmg 2d4/2d4; AL CN

The hairless warthogs are covered with ulcerous sores. They have eight spindly legs resembling those of spiders, accounting for their exceptional movement rate and enabling them to scuttle up walls and other surfaces.

Giant Eagle (with Steamwall modifications): AC 7; MV 3, Fl 48 (D); HD 4; hp 23; THAC0 17; #AT 3; Dmg 1d6/1d6/3d6; AL CN

The eagle has dozens of variously-sized eyes all over its head, though only two are functional. Its bill is filled with needle-sharp teeth.

Steam Chasm: The party approaches a chasm 50 feet wide and 15 feet deep. Wisps of steam smelling like rotten fish rise from the chasm. The PCs can search for an alternate route around the chasm (which takes an extra 1d6 hours) or they can climb down the wall of the chasm, then climb up the opposite side.

Unless he's aided by a rope, a character climbing up or down a wall must roll a successful Dexterity check. If the check fails, he falls and suffers 1d6 points of damage.

Gas Eruption: The party hears a rumble in the distance and feels the earth shake; 2d4 rounds later, there is a violent explosion as a volcano erupts, spewing a cloud of noxious gases into the air. Assume the volcano is one mile away from the party (to determine the direction of the volcano from the party, roll 1d8, where 1 = N, 2 = NE, 3 = E, and so on).

There are no immediate effects from the volcanic gases. However, a half-hour after the explosion, dark green clouds gather overhead. When a full hour has passed after the explosion, rain begins to fall, covering an area within a ten-mile radius of the volcano. For every hour a character is exposed to the rain, he must roll a Constitution check; if he fails the check, he suffers 1-2 points of damage. Sheltered characters are safe from the effects of the rain (assume the party has a 20% chance per hour of locating a cave or other suitable shelter in this particular area).

Mud Pit: The party discovers a 30-foot-diameter pit surrounded by soft mud. The mud extends about 75 feet around the pit and is about a foot deep; characters walk through the mud at ¼ of their normal movement rate.

The pit is actually a geyser that erupts a shower of hot mud once every hour without warning (to determine the number of minutes before the next eruption, roll 1d12 and multiply the result by 5). Two rounds of rumbling precede an eruption. All characters within 75 feet of the pit when it erupts must roll a Constitution check. Those rolling a successful check suffer 1-2 points of damage; those failing the check suffer 2d4 points of damage. Those within ten feet of the pit suffer an additional 1d4 points of damage, regardless of the results of their Constitution check.

If the geyser doesn't erupt, a character within five feet of the pit has a 5% chance of slipping and falling, landing in a bed of hot, soft mud below; he suffers 2d6 points of heat and impact damage.

Corpses: The party discovers a pair of hobgoblin corpses with ulcerated skin. If the party has been to either Prerge (area 25) or Tyaru (area 26), they recognize the ulcerated hobgoblins as similar to the residents of those villages. (Actually, these are exiles from Tyaru who were sent into the mountains to die; see the "Hobgoblin Exiles" encounter for more information.)

This encounter occurs only once.

Hobgoblin Exiles: The party sees a hobgoblin with ulcerated skin (use typical villager statistics) heading east, dragging the corpse of another hobgoblin. If the party approaches the hobgoblin, he looks at them fearfully, then drags the corpse faster in an attempt to escape. He soon collapses in exhaustion.

If the party questions him, the hobgoblin says his name is Hortt. His dead companion is his brother, Brok. Hortt and his brother are natives of Prerge. When the people of his village become too diseased to work, Hortt explains, they are sent into the mountains to die. Brok died yesterday. "His final wish," says Hortt, "was for his body to be cast into the Indanalis Sea." Hortt is attempting to drag him there, "but I grow sicker and weaker by the hour."

Hortt says that he and his brother accumulated a sizeable treasure during their lives. "If you help me get my brother to the sea, the treasure is yours." If the PCs decline, Hortt continues on his way east, and the encounter is over. If the PCs agree, Hortt tells them that one of their number will have to

carry Brok's body. (Brok's body isn't poisonous and weighs about 70 pounds). The party can take the body to any location on the shore of the Indanalis. While in the company of Hortt, don't roll for Encounter Zone encounters (however, if the party moves into area 28, they suffer the effects of the noxious mist as described).

Once at the seashore, Hortt asks the PCs to place Brok's body near the edge of the water, then watches as it gradually washes into the sea.

When the body has disappeared, Hortt tells the party to go to Prerge and look for a red stone shack in the center of the village. Beneath a dirt pile in the northwestern corner of the shack is his treasure. That said, Hortt thanks the party, then stumbles away to return to the mountains and await his death. He refuses to accompany the party if they ask. Even if the party manages to cure his disease (such as with *cure disease* or a similar spell), he insists on spending the rest of his days wandering the Steamwall.

This encounter occurs only once.

28. Indanalis Shore

While in this area, roll for Encounter Zone 27 encounters. At this time of the year, the mists rolling in from the Indanalis Sea are especially noxious. The characters suffer constant headaches and stinging eyes while in area 28; additionally, they must roll a Constitution check every hour, suffering 1 point of damage for every failed check.

29. Ahhar

Size: Not applicable
Race: Not applicable
Goods: Not applicable
Law Level: Not applicable

Ahhar appears to be devoid of life, a collection of abandoned shacks and dilapidated buildings. When the PCs approach the village, go immediately to Chapter 5. When the party has completed the events of Chapter 5, the adventure resumes in this area.

30. Ichabrutichach Border

The Ichabrutichach border is heavily patrolled by gnome warriors, hired by Ichabrutichach administrators to keep out hobgoblins and other Steamwall undesirables. If the party crosses the border, within an hour they are met by a troop of 30 gnome warriors (use the generic statistics below; feel free to modify the levels, weapons, and armor). The warriors demand that the party turns back and warn them not to return. If the party attacks, the gnomes defend themselves, summoning sufficient reinforcements to drive the party back across the border.

Gnome Warrior (2nd-level fighter): AC 5; MV 6; hp 9; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8 (battle axe); AL NG

31. Thenol Border

When the PCs enter this area, they experience an encounter identical to the encounter described in area 30. In this case, the border is patrolled by militia from Hussurran and Ymiral (use exceptional villager statistics).

Troubleshooting

If the party runs out of time. The party has five weeks to complete their mission. If the PCs haven't had a chance to experience the events of Chapters 3, 4, and 5 when five weeks have expired, Ella becomes furious, saying they're risking the wrath of her master. Ella demands that Grott make an emergency moon reading. Grott studies the evening sky, then announces that they have been granted another week. (This is their only extension; at the end of the week, proceed to Chapter 6.)

If Ella dies. If circumstances are such that Ella's death is unavoidable, Grott insists they continue with their mission as planned; assume that Grott can summon the master in Chapter 6 when the mission is completed. If both Grott and Ella are killed, the PCs can continue with the mission by themselves; the DM will have to modify the mission accordingly. (For instance, there will no longer be any moon readings. Also, assume that minions of the master have been tracking the party; at an appropriate point, the PCs experience a dream summoning them to the Indanalis shore. When the PCs reach the shore, proceed to Chapter 6, making adjustments in the text as necessary.)



CHAPTER 3: PIRIM

The events of this chapter take place in the village of Pirim (see encounter 15 in Chapter 2). Refer to the Pirim map. Don't roll for Village Encounter Table encounters until directed to do so in the "Exploring Pirim" section.

DM's BACKGROUND

Pirim was founded about 200 years ago by a group of hardy human settlers from Thenol who abandoned their troubled homeland for a simpler life in the desolate Steamwall Mountains.

A few months ago, Pirim's serenity was interrupted by the arrival of a pair of red dragons. The dragons delighted in terrorizing the community by scorching crops, stealing livestock, and ambushing citizens.

The Pirim Council of Law sent messengers to Kristophan offering a reward to anyone who would come to Pirim to kill the dragons. But so far, there have been no takers.

The Council has no idea where the dragons make their lair. However, knowing the red dragons' love of treasure, the Council has constructed a large platform in the center of the village. The Council plans to place treasure items on this platform to lure the dragons out of hiding.

Unknown to the Council, there is a traitor in their midst. One of the Council members, Tobin Shuhr, is a secret ally of the evil wizard Jajaj, who rules the hobgoblin village of Kleeg (see area 14 in Chapter 2). Tobin intends to inform Jajaj when the Council plans to place the treasure on the platform. Jajaj and his minions will then storm the village and steal the treasure.

ARRIVAL

When the party approaches Pirim, Ella tells the PCs that she and Grott will remain hidden in the woods until the PCs finish their mission. "We can't risk being recognized."

Pirim is completely enclosed by high wooden wall. As the PCs approach the entrance gate (area 1), they are stopped by four village guards who ask them their business in Pirim. Whether or not the PCs identify themselves as dragon hunters, the guards escort them to the council chambers. Once there, the council members offer the PCs the job of killing the red dragons.

AUDIENCE WITH THE COUNCIL

The guards lead the PCs to a stone building in the village (area 2). Two elderly men and an elderly woman sit behind a long table in the center of the room, engaged in a quiet discussion. "Pardon the interruption," says a guard, "but the dragon hunters have arrived."

One of the men rises to greet the PCs, introducing himself as Brin Bistin, one of the members of the Pirim Council of Law. He introduces his fellow members; the woman is Ara Kano, the other man is Tobin Shuhr.

Brin explains that Pirim has been plagued by assaults from two red dragons for several months. He has no idea where the dragons lair, and all efforts to track them have been futile. The Council plans to place jewels and other items from the village's treasure vault on the platform to lure the dragons out of hiding. The PCs will then attack the dragons, supported by Pirim warriors who will shoot arrows and throw spears from behind the village walls. The rest of the villagers will take cover in an underground cave for the duration of the battle. If the party succeeds in destroying both red dragons, the Council will pay them 1,000 stl.

Brin asks the PCs if they have any questions. If the PCs ask if they can search for the dragons themselves, Brin says the dragons are too well-hidden and any search will be futile. (He's right.) If the PCs worry that using treasure to lure the dragons is too risky, Brin says that the dragons are too smart to be enticed out of hiding by livestock or other lures. "but treasure will be too hard for them to resist." (He's right again.)

Unless the PCs need extra time to prepare, Brin says they'll execute the plan tomorrow at dawn. Until then, the PCs are free to explore the village. They can stay at the Endless Summer Inn as guests of the Council.

EXPLORING PIRIM

There's not much to see in Pirim. The primary areas of interest are the market district (area 3, the cave shelter (area 4; a 10-foot-diameter tunnel leads to a huge underground cave), the treasure platform (area 5; this is a 20-foot-diameter wooden platform atop a 50-foot pole), and the Endless Summer Inn (area 6, Pirim's only inn).

As the PCs explore the village, Encounter Table encounters occur at the DM's discretion. If it is necessary to execute the Law Enforcement Routine, the Council automatically finds the PCs innocent, asking them to please stay out of trouble.

DRAGON DREAM

That night after the PCs drift off to sleep, they all experience a dream of a ghostly brass dragon, its skin torn and bleeding. "We wish to help you destroy the red dragons," it says. "Journey north from the village to a hill covered with brambles. Go now. We beg you not to wait."

The image fades, and the PCs awaken simultaneously. If they exchange stories, they discover that they all experienced the same dream. (If they ignore the dream, see the "Troubleshooting" section at the end of this chapter.)

If the PCs leave Pirim and head about 200 yards due north, they see a high hill on the horizon, completely covered with brambles. As they approach the hill, a small brass dragon flutters out of the clouds and hovers before them.

Very Young Brass Dragon: AC 2; MV 12, Fl 30 (C), Br 6; HD 8; hp 45; THAC0 13; #AT 3 + special (kick 1d6 + 2 feet, and 1d10 + points of dmg); Dmg 1d6 + 2/1d6 + 4d4 + 2; SA cone of *sleep* gas (70' long x 5' x 20'; victims must roll a successful saving throw vs. breath weapon or fall asleep for 20 minutes) and cloud of blistering heat (50' long x 40' x 20'; dmg 4d4 + 2, roll a successful saving throw vs. breath weapon for half damage), can breathe three times per day, once every three rounds, + 2 bonus to claw attacks if diving; SD *speak with animals* at will; AL CG; Size H (12' body, 10' tail)

Languages: Brass Dragon, Auric (13)

The dragon introduces himself as Tryff, "the son of Marlaine. I have been sent here to guide you to my mother. Follow me." Tryff leads the PCs through a narrow valley. If the PCs ask why they've been summoned, Tryff says he promised

his mother not to discuss the mission until they get to their lair.

After traveling about two miles, Tryff leads the PCs to an opening in the side of a hill and beckons for them to follow. The opening leads to a passage that winds for about 50 yards into the earth, ending in a large cavern.

A huge brass dragon lies in a nest of leaves against the far wall. Bloody wounds cover her body, her tail is bent and twisted, and both her hind legs appear to be broken. She raises her head when the PCs enter.

Marlaine (mature adult brass dragon): AC –3; MV 12, Fl 30 (C), Br 6; HD 15; hp 20 (due to wounds); THAC0 5; #AT 3 + special (snatch; kick 1d6 + 7 feet, and 1d10 + 7 points of dmg; wing buffet 1d10 + 7 points of dmg; tail slap up to 7 creatures for 2d6+7 points of dmg, victims must roll a successful saving throw vs. petrification or be stunned for 1d4 + 1 minutes); Dmg 1d6 + 7/1d6 + 7/4d4 + 7; SA cone of *sleep* gas (70' long x 5' x 20'; victims must roll a successful saving throw vs. breath weapon or fall asleep for 70 minutes) and cloud of blistering heat (50' long x 40' x 20'; dmg 4d4 + 2, roll a successful saving throw vs. breath weapon for half damage), can breathe three times per day, once every three rounds, +2 bonus to claw attacks if diving; SD *fear* within 25 yards (save vs. petrification or fight with –2 penalty to attack and damage); *speak with animals* at will, *create* or *destroy water* three times per day; *control temperature* three times per day in a 70' radius; *dust devil* and *suggestion* once per day; MR 25%; AL CG; Size G (50' body, 45' tail)

Languages: Brass Dragon, Auric (14), Copper Dragon (14)

Spells: 1st Level— *detect magic, light;* 2nd Level— *detect evil, ESP*

Marlaine introduces herself as Tryff scampers to her side. She whistles softly, and five more very young brass dragons peek out from the shadows behind her. "You've met Tryff," she says. "These are my other children: Corriya, Bronsos, Myck, Damiander, and Violor." (Use the same statistics for all of Marlaine's children.)

Marlaine tells the party that her children have been secretly following their progress. She says she is aware that they have come to Pirim to fight the red dragons. "This was a quiet region until they came," she says. "The red dragons are a menace not only to those of Pirim, but to all other peace-loving creatures as well." A week ago, Marlaine and her dragon knight, a woman named Jari Elarno, faced the red dragons in combat. The red dragons triumphed, severely wounding both Marlaine and Jari. Marlaine is recovering slowly, but Jari died. "I seek to avenge Jari's death," she says.

Though Marlaine is too weak to assist the PCs (nothing the PCs can do will significantly improve Marlaine's condition), she believes that her children are old enough to fight the red dragons. "However, they are too inexperienced to fight alone. Likewise, I fear that even you cannot defeat the red dragons without assistance. I propose that you and my children join forces and attack the red dragons as a team. The tactics of your attack against the red dragons are up to you."

Marlaine suggests that the PCs return to Pirim while she spends the rest of the night giving her children some last-minute training. At dawn, the children will fly to Pirim, landing just outside the village, where they will rendezvous with the PCs.

The PCs can discuss tactics with Marlaine's children now, or they can wait until they rendezvous with them in the morning; in either case, the children agree to whatever the PCs suggest.

Marlaine says that in the morning, her children will bring several items that formerly belonged to her knight. The PCs can keep the items. If the PCs have questions about the tactics for tomorrow's battle, Marlaine reviews the information in the "Dragon Preparation" section below. When the PCs have asked all their questions, Marlaine thanks them again and sends them back to Pirim.

BEFORE THE BATTLE

VILLAGE PREPARATION

At dawn the following morning, the PCs are awakened by Brin Bistin who takes them to the platform pole (area 5). Villagers at the top of the pole are hauling up baskets by ropes, emptying their contents on the platform. "When they've finished," says Brin, "there will be 30,000 stl worth of precious gems on the platform, a substantial portion of our treasury." Villagers are steadily filing into the underground cave (area 4); Brin and the other Council members will be joining them shortly (Tobin also joins them).

Dozens of villagers armed with spears and bows are stationed on raised platforms around the interior of the walls surrounding the village. The armed villagers will provide as much assistance to the PCs as they can, but they will not leave their stations.

In about an hour, all of the unarmed villagers have filed into the cave. The platform pole has been piled high with gems. The armed villagers stand ready at their stations. The village is silent.

The PCs notice several figures flying toward the village from the north. As they fly closer, the PCs recognize them as Marlaine's children. The children land on a hill about 100 yards away from the village, waiting for the PCs.

DRAGON PREPARATION

If the PCs join the brass dragons on the hill, Tryff says that their mother instructed them to obey all commands given to them by the PCs; the dragons will move, attack, and use their breath weapons as directed by their riders. Each dragon can carry a single rider; the PCs can choose their own mounts (there is no significant difference among the dragons). If there are more dragons than PCs, the extra dragons will fight alone (either the DM or the players control the extra dragons, whichever the DM prefers).

The dragons have the following equipment for the PCs, which formerly belonged to Jari Elarno, Marlaine's deceased dragon knight. The PCs can distribute the equipment among themselves any way they wish. Regardless of the outcome of the battle, the PCs can keep the equipment.

1. A special *shield +2, +3 vs. dragons.* The shield magically protects its wielder so that a successful saving throw vs. breath weapon means no damage from dragon breath, and a failed saving throw results in only half damage.
2. A leather dragon saddle that has been modified to fit a very young dragon. A character using the saddle greatly reduces the rider's chance of falling (see the "Chance of Falling" section below).
3. A *long sword* +2, *+3 vs. dragons.* This weapon has a +3 bonus against all evil dragons.

CHANCE OF FALLING

A PC may fall off his mount in the heat of battle. The base chance of a PC falling is 70%; this presumes that the mount is participating in combat and that the PC's hands are freed to use a weapon and are not being used to cling to the mount. The base chance is modified as follows:

–50% if the rider has a proficiency in airborne riding (of dragons).

–20% if the rider is using any type of saddle other than Jari's.



–02% for each point of the rider's Dexterity and Strength above 12 (considering 18 as maximum Strength).
+02% for each point of the rider's Dexterity and Strength below 12.

All modifiers are cumulative. A PCs' chance of falling can't be more than 90% or less than 10%. The PC using Jari's saddle has only a 10% chance of falling (ignore all other modifiers).

Once combat begins, a PC's chance of falling is checked every three rounds while the PC is engaged in combat or whenever the dragon is performing a difficult maneuver or has suffered a blow. The DM has the option of increasing or decreasing the frequency of these checks as he sees fit; for instance, checks might occur more often if an airborne dragon is fighting several opponents.

If the dragon is on the ground when his rider falls, there is a 50% chance the PC suffers 1d4 points of damage; otherwise, no damage is suffered. The dragon remains stationary if he loses his rider, but he continues to defend himself with his claws and breath weapons. It takes a rider one round to remount.

A rider slipping from his airborne mount can roll a successful Dexterity check to grab the saddle (or the dragon) and prevent himself from falling. If he then rolls a successful Strength check, he pulls himself back aboard the dragon (this takes one round, during which time he can take no other actions). If he fails the Strength check, he falls. A PC falling from an airborne dragon suffers normal falling damage. An airborne dragon immediately descends to the ground to retrieve his fallen rider; it takes the rider one round to remount.

Enemy Factions

Two different factions will be attacking Pirim. Neither is aware of the other's plan. Both consider the PCs and their dragon mounts as enemies.

Red Dragon Faction

This faction consists of the two young red dragons that have been plaguing Pirim.

Young Red Dragons (2): AC –1; MV 9, Fl 30 (C), Jp 3; HD 11; hp 60 each; THAC0 9; #AT 3 + special (kick 1d6 + 2 feet, and 1d10 + 2 points of dmg); Dmg 1d10 + 2/1d10 + 2/3d10 + 2; SA cone fire (90' long x 5' x 30'; dmg 8d10 + 2, roll a successful saving throw vs. breath weapon for half damage), can breathe three times per day, once every three rounds, +2 bonus to claw attacks if diving; SD *affect normal fires,* three times per day; AL CE; Size H (20' body, 18' tail).

The red dragons intend to make swooping attacks against the village, doing as much damage to the walls and guards as possible. When an opening presents itself, they plan to snatch up the treasure from the platform, then soar away to the safety of the hills.

If the PCs attack them, the red dragons defend themselves to the death. Otherwise, they concentrate their attacks on the village. The dragons are unaware that Jajaj and his allies are also planning to attack the village.

The red dragons each use one breath weapon early in the battle, reserving the other two as emergency weapons. (If a red dragon breath weapon ignites the wooden walls surrounding the village, the guards quickly extinguish the fires.)

Wizard Faction

This faction consists of eight hobgoblins and one hill giant led by the evil wizard Jajaj (see the entry for area 14 in Chapter 2 for his stats).

Hill Giant: AC 3; MV 12; HD 12 + 1; hp 49; THAC0 9; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 or by oversized club (2d6+7); SA hurl rocks for dmg 2d8; AL CE

Hobgoblins (8): AC 5 (bone armor); MV 9; HD 1 + 1; hp 7 each; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 (spear or hand axe); AL LE

This faction intends to breach the wall, enter the village to steal the treasure (the hobgoblins will chop down the pole, or the giant will pull it down), then retreat to Kleeg.

If the PCs attack this faction, the hill giant fights to the death. Any hobgoblin losing half or more of its hit points panics and retreats, vanishing into the hills. Jajaj remains in the rear and attempts to stay out of the battle as much as possible. However, when the opportunity presents itself, Jajaj will attack the PCs with *stinking cloud* spell, followed by a *gust of wind* spell (he can attack with this combination of spells twice); he will also attack with *magic missile* and *ice storm* spells. If the battle is not going well for his faction, Jajaj turns invisible, abandons his troops, and retreats to Kleeg (the hobgoblins and hill giant continue the assault as described). Jajaj

is aware that the red dragons are also after the treasure, but he and his allies will avoid them if possible.

THE BATTLE

Shortly after the PCs have rendezvoused with the brass dragons, the red dragons approach the village from the west (see map). Jajaj's faction, which has been waiting in the woods east of the village (see map) for the red dragons to arrive and distract the PCs, approaches the village from the east.

On any given round, all of the PCs (and their mounts) can attack the dragon faction, or all of them can attack Jajaj's faction. The PCs can also split their forces to attack both factions, or they can decide not to attack either faction. In any case, the villagers inflict 1d4 points of damage on both the dragon faction and the wizard faction each round.

OUTCOMES

There are four likely outcomes from the battle. The DM is free to modify or add to any of these outcomes to accommodate special circumstances.

1. The dragon faction steals the treasure. As soon as the dragons steal the treasure, they begin to fly west. If the PCs pursue and catch up with them, the red dragons fight to the death. If the PCs destroy them and recover the treasure, proceed to the "Success" section. If the PCs haven't caught up with the red dragons within 15 minutes, the red dragons have successfully eluded them. The PCs will notice the general direction in which the dragons are flying; it will take the PCs a week to search the wilderness and track the dragons to their lair.

If the PCs locate the dragons, the dragons defend themselves to the death. If the PCs defeat the dragons, they discover that 50% of the treasure has been lost. If they return the remaining 50% of the treasure to the Pirim officials, proceed to the "Success" section; however, the PCs earn only half of the indicated reward. If the PCs don't destroy the dragons and fail to recover any of the treasure, proceed to the "Failure" section.

2. The wizard faction steals the treasure. If both dragons are alive, they attack the wizard faction; if the battle does not go well for the wizard faction, Jajaj turns invisible and abandons his troops, retreating to Kleeg. The hobgoblins and hill giant fight to the death. If the dragons win, they steal the treasure; see the first outcome above.

As soon as the wizard faction steals the treasure, they begin to move toward Kleeg. If the PCs catch up with them, the members of the wizard faction fight to the death to keep the treasure. If the PCs defeat them and recover the treasure, proceed to the "Success" section. If the PCs allow the wizard faction to escape, proceed to the "Failure" section.

If the wizard faction eludes the PCs, the PCs can track them to Kleeg. They are attacked by eight hobgoblins as soon as they enter the village. Jajaj joins the attack two rounds later, using his spells (or his dagger, if he hasn't yet recovered the use of his spells). The hobgoblins fight to the death, but if Jajaj loses half or more of his hit points, he offers to reveal the location of the stolen treasure in exchange for his life. However, the PCs discover that 50% of the treasure has been given to the troops and is lost. If they return the remaining 50% of the treasure to the Pirim officials, proceed to the "Success" section; however, the PCs earn only half of the indicated reward. If the PCs subdue Jajaj, they can turn him over to the Pirim authorities (where he will eventually be found guilty of crimes against the city and executed).

3. The PCs defeat the wizard faction. The red dragons continue to attack. If the PCs destroy the dragons, proceed to the "Success" section. If the dragons steal the treasure, see outcome 1 above.

4. The PCs defeat the dragon faction. The wizard faction withdraws, heading toward Kleeg. The PCs can pursue them if they wish. Proceed to the "Success" section.

TOBIN'S FLIGHT

If the wizard faction is defeated or is driven away, Tobin panics. He leaves the cave, exits the village, and stands in an open field not far from the village gates. He produces a wooden charm from his cloak and begins to chant. (Jajaj gave him the charm, telling him that if he ran into trouble, he could use it to summon a giant bird to deliver him to safety. The giant bird will only come, said Jajaj, if the charm is used in an open field. However, the device is defective and doesn't work.) After ten minutes of futile chanting, Tobin gives up and flees into the woods.

If the PCs don't bother with Tobin, he escapes, never to be seen again. If the PCs chase down Tobin, he confesses to everything. If the PCs turn him over to the Pirim authorities, he is found guilty of crimes against the city and executed.

FAILURE

The brass dragons, crushed by their defeat, bid farewell to the PCs and sadly depart. The Pirim Council expresses disappointment at the PCs' failure, thanks them for their effort, and sends them on their way; there is no reward. Tobin is never revealed as a traitor. Ella is furious with the PCs. "My master will not be happy to hear this," she seethes. "You can explain to her the details of your dismal failure."

SUCCESS

Flush with the thrill of victory, the brass dragons thank the PCs for the invigorating experience, and depart. The Pirim Council congratulates the PCs on their triumph, rewards them with 1,000 stl, and sends them on their way. (Tobin is revealed as a traitor and executed.) Ella is delighted, and she eagerly accepts the dragon ears.

WHAT NEXT?

If the PCs haven't yet experienced the events of Chapters 4 and 5, return to area 15 in Chapter 2. If the PCs have experienced Chapters 4 and 5, proceed to Chapter 6.

TROUBLESHOOTING

If the PCs don't act on Marlaine's message. If the PCs decide to ignore the dream, have her image appear in their room shortly after they awaken. The image says they'll be unable to defeat the red dragons without her help. If necessary, an image of Amanthus could also appear to convince the PCs to do what Marlaine says.

If Ella orders the PCs to kill the brass dragons. Because Ella and Grott stay out of sight for most of the events of this chapter, they probably won't be aware of Marlaine and her children unless the PCs mention them. However, if Ella does find out about the brass dragons, she will demand that the PCs kill them. The PCs, of course, can always pretend they don't know where to find the dragons. Alternatively, if they lead Ella to Marlaine's lair, or Ella otherwise locates it, they will discover that Marlaine and her children have abandoned it.

Chapter 4: Sargohgg

The events of this chapter take place in the village of Sargohgg (see encounter 11 in Chapter 2). Refer to the Sargohgg map. Don't roll for Encounter Table encounters in this chapter.

DM's Background

Originally a hobgoblin village, Sargohgg became the home of a slig tribe when the former residents died of a fever plague. Not long ago, a young black dragon began terrorizing the sligs, destroying much of the village in the process. After several days of bloody battle, the sligs were able to lure the dragon into a nearby cavern where they eventually destroyed it. To celebrate their victory, the sligs are roasting and consuming the dragon corpse in a process that will take several days to complete.

Erestem, the secret master of the dragon killers, wants the black dragon dead because he had snubbed an invitation to join her army of evil minions. Erestem is unaware that the sligs recently killed the dragon.

Generic NPCs

Use the following generic NPCs for this chapter. Feel free to vary the weapons and hit points.

Slig Villager: AC 3; MV 9; HD 3 + 3; hp 15; THAC0 17; #AT 1 (2); Dmg 1d6 + 2 (spear, +2 bonus for Strength) + special (venomous spittle); SA squirt venomous spittle up to ten feet three times per day for 1d6 points of damage, an attack against AC 10 is rolled to determine if the spittle struck the victim's eyes (if so, victim must roll a successful saving throw vs. poison or be blinded for 1d4 + 1 rounds); SD immune to normal fires, but suffer damage from magical fires (subtract 1 from each die of damage to determine damage suffered); AL LE

Slig Warrior: AC 3; MV 9; HD 6; hp 25; THAC0 15; #AT 1 (2); Dmg 1d8 + 3 (battle axe, includes +3 bonus for strength), or 1d4 (bite) + special (venomous spittle); SA squirt venomous spittle up to ten feet six times per day for 1d6 points of damage, an attack against AC 10 is rolled to determine if the spittle struck the victim's eyes (if so, victim must roll a successful saving throw vs. poison or be blinded for 1d4 + 1 rounds); SD immune to normal fires, but suffer damage from magical fires (subtract 1 from each die of damage to determine damage suffered); AL LE

Slig Champion: AC 3; MV 9; HD 9; hp 36; THAC0 11; #AT 1 (2); Dmg 2d4 + 4 (bardiche, +4 bonus for Strength), or 1d4 (bite) + special (venomous spittle); SA squirt venomous spittle up to 20 feet six times per day for 1d6 points of damage, an attack against AC 10 is rolled to determine if the spittle struck the victim's eyes (if so, victim must roll a successful saving throw vs. poison or be blinded for 1d4 + 1 rounds); SD immune to normal fires, but suffer damage from magical fires (subtract 1 from each die of damage to determine damage suffered); AL LE

Arrival

Sargohgg is in a narrow valley surrounded by high mountains whose walls are sheer and steep. Ella leads the party to a vantage point overlooking the village (area 1). The village resembles a battleground, with most of its stone and wood huts crushed and burned. The stone walls originally surrounding the village have been shattered into rubble. There are no signs of life.

However, after the party observes the village for a few minutes, they see a six-foot-tall humanoid with a horny, orange hide and a long snout emerge from a cave (area 3a). The humanoid carries a large wooden bucket. She enters one of the few intact huts (area 2a). A minute later, she leaves the hut, struggling with the bucket that now appears to be filled with liquid, and returns to the cave. (She will repeat the process every hour.)

If the PCs don't recognize the humanoid, Ella identifies her as a slig. She tells the PCs to investigate the village while she and Grott remain behind "to watch for intruders." If the PCs return to her after investigating the village, Ella sends them back to search for the dragon and bring back its ears.

Exploring Sargohgg

Gardens of black mushrooms surround the perimeter of the village (see map), interspersed with what appears to be patches of barren ground. If the PCs examine the gardens closely, they see narrow footpaths winding through the mushrooms (the sligs use these paths to get in and out of the village). The gardens smell like rotten onions; if the PCs take a path through a garden, the odor makes their eyes water and their stomachs churn. Any PC who touches a mushroom with bare flesh suffers 1d6 points of contact poison damage if he fails his saving throw vs. poison; he suffers no damage if the roll is successful (the sligs are immune to the poison).

The patches of barren ground between the mushroom gardens are actually pit traps. The sligs are masters of creating pit traps; the traps are so well disguised that potential victims have only half of their normal chances of discovering them. The sides of the pits slant at sharp angles so the bottoms are wider than the tops. The sides are coated with animal fat, making them difficult to climb. The bottoms are lined with sharp wooden spikes coated with mushroom poison. A PC who falls in a pit suffers 2d6 points of impalement damage plus an additional 1d6 points of poison damage if he fails to his saving throw vs. poison. A victim who attempts to escape a pit by climbing up the sides must roll a Dexterity check with a –4 penalty; if he fails the check, he falls in and suffers additional impalement damage.

The perimeter of the village is marked by rubble from the destroyed stone walls. As soon as the PCs cross the perimeter, two snarling wolves charge from the debris of a destroyed hut and attack.

Wolf (2): AC 7; MV 18; HD 2 + 2; hp 9 each; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4 + 1; AL N

If the PCs explore the village, they find destroyed huts and a few bloody corpses of sligs and wolves. Much of the destruction appears to have been caused by acid burns. Areas of interest include a large pit containing a half-dozen bloody goat corpses (area 2b; this is the sligs' wild game pit) and another pit containing three human corpses (area 2c; this is the sligs' slave pit).

The stench of rotten onions mixed with cinnamon fills the northern section of the village. The stench grows stronger as the PCs near area 2a.

The odor inside the hut is nearly overpowering, causing the PCs' eyes to water and their heads to throb. An elderly female slig is hunched over a huge stone vat. Clay bowls and wooden buckets surround her on the floor, filled with thick liquids, colored powders, and slimy entrails. Stirring the vat with a wooden ladle, she flashes a toothless smile at the PCs. She dumps a handful of entrails in the vat, then spews venom in it.

This is G'harr, the oldest female slig in the village. She's stirring up a special concoction used to baste the dragon corpse in the cavern (area 3d). G'harr is nearing the end of her life and is slightly addled. She has no fear of the PCs. If attacked, she defends herself with her bite (she's used up her day's allocation of spittle). If left alone, she continues stirring her vat, occasionally adding handfuls of foul substances. Although she won't initiate conversation, she'll answer any of the following questions. To all other questions, she responds with a cackle.

Who are you? "I am G'harr. I am everyone's grandma. Maybe your grandma too." (Cackles.)

What are you making? "Secret recipe. Good tasting. For all my sons and daughters."

What's it for? "Celebration. Feast. To thank Frugruras for our victory."

Who's Frugruras? "The holy one." (Any PC with the religion proficiency recognizes this as a name for an evil god worshiped by obscure sects.)

What happened to the village? "It was the dragon! Blood everywhere! Delicious!"

Where's the dragon now? Where are the other villagers? "Are you invited? You're late! Better hurry! Take this with you!" She gives them a bowl of the liquid from her vat.

INTO THE CAVERN

Refer to area 3 of the Sargohgg map. The cave entrance is about 30 feet in diameter and opens to a passage that winds into the hill. The cavern smells of burned meat. The floors and walls are made of packed earth.

3A. STRETCHED VINE

After the PCs have traveled about 30 yards, they see a vine stretched across their path. The vine is about six inches off the ground.

The vine poses no threat to the PCs. The sligs placed it here to distract intruders from the real danger, a pit trap on the opposite side. The opening to the pit is about 20-foot-square, concealed by a woven mat of vines. A layer of dirt on top of the mat conceals the opening. The trap is so well disguised that potential victims have only half their normal chances of discovering it. Two five-foot-wide paths on either side of the trap provide safe passage.

The bottom of the pit is lined with about a foot of soft mud laced with a special poison derived from black mushrooms. Contact with the mud causes burns that inflict 1d6 points of damage unless the victim rolls a successful saving throw vs. poison. The sides of the pit slant at sharp angles so the bottoms are wider than the tops. The sides are coated with animal fat, making them difficult to climb. A victim attempting to escape by climbing up the sides must roll a Dexterity check with a –4 penalty; if he fails the check, he falls back in.

3B. VINE CURTAIN.

A curtain of woven vines conceals the opening leading to area 3b. A layer of dried mud covers the curtain, disguising it so well that the PCs have only half their normal chances of discovering it. (The events described in the "Interrupted Meal" section presume that the PCs don't discover the vine curtain. If they do, see the "Troubleshooting" section at the end of this chapter.)

3C. CONCEALED PASSAGE

Two slig warriors lurk in this passage. Through small cracks in the vine curtain, they can spot intruders.

3D. MAIN CAVERN

The aroma of burning flesh mingles with the stench of decaying meat, filling the entire cavern. The air is thick with smoke, which rises in curls to escape through cracks in the ceiling about 200 feet from the floor. Torches imbedded in the walls illuminate the cavern in soft light.

The rotting, half-eaten corpse of a young black dragon sprawls against the east wall. Glowing coals have been tucked under the dragon's body; others have been placed on its tail, legs, and back.

Six sligs (five villagers and one champion) are seated on the ground around the dragon, chewing on dragon meat. Every minute or so, one of the sligs rises to his feet and tears out a chunk of flesh that has been singed by a burning coal. The slig dunks the flesh chunk in a bowl of thick liquid (the concoction prepared by G'harr), then takes his place on the ground to enjoy the meal. Though much of the dragon flesh has rotted, the sligs don't seem to mind. A giant boar, also nestled near the corpse, gobbles up the occasional meat scrap tossed by a slig.

Giant Boar: AC 6; MV 12; HD 7; hp 28; THAC0 13; #AT 1; Dmg 3d6; SA continues to fight for 1d4 rounds after reaching 0 to –10 hp but dies immediately upon reaching –11 or fewer hp; AL N

3E. COAL PIT

Hot coals, glowing bright orange, fill this shallow pit. Any character falling into the pit suffers 1d6 points of damage. (Sligs are immune to the heat of the coals.)

3F. TREASURE PIT

The bottom of this ten-foot-deep pit is lined with a bed of black mushrooms that smell like rotten onions. Any PC who touches a mushroom suffers 1d6 points of damage if he fails his saving throw vs. poison; he suffers no damage if the roll is successful.

The mushrooms are growing on top of a foot of dirt. Beneath the dirt is the sligs' treasure: 110 stl, eight turquoise chunks worth 20 stl each, and two jade chunks worth 90 stl each.

3G. BURIAL PIT

The hobgoblins who formerly lived in Sargohgg used this pit to bury their dead. The pit appears to contain only rocks, debris, and loose dirt. Any character who rummages through the pit for two rounds, presumably searching for treasure, disturbs the hobgoblin corpses, which begin digging their way out. It takes the corpses five rounds to completely dig themselves free, at which point they attack all living creatures in area 3g.

Hobgoblin Zombies (4): AC 8; MV 6; HD 2; hp 9 each; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8; SD immune to *sleep, charm, hold,* and *death* magic spells, poisons, and cold-based spells; AL N

The hobgoblin zombies fight to the death, though they will not leave area 3g. If all of the intruders leave, the surviving zombies cover themselves with dirt and debris. However, if an intruder enters again, the zombies dig themselves free (a process taking five minutes) and attack again.

Under no circumstances will the sligs or the wild boar enter this room.

INTERRUPTED MEAL

As soon as the PCs pass east of the vine curtain (3b), they can see everything in area 3d, including the dragon corpse, the boar, and sligs. The sligs have their backs to the PCs and won't notice the party (unless the PCs cry out to them, or otherwise draw attention to themselves).

However, the sligs behind the curtain (in area 3c) have been watching the PCs. The area 3c sligs wait until the PCs proceed into the main cavern (3d); the sligs then burst through the curtain, screech loudly to alert the sligs around the dragon, and attack the PCs from behind. (If the PCs attack the 3d sligs as soon as they see them, the 3c sligs burst through the vine curtain and attack the PCs from behind.)

As soon as they hear the warning screech from the 3c sligs, the 3d sligs rise to their feet and charge the PCs. The boar follows his slig companions into battle. The sligs and the boar intend to fight to the death and pursue if necessary. They do not negotiate with the PCs.

Five rounds after the battle begins, the following events occur (at the DM's discretion, these events may occur sooner):

1. Moans and shrieks can be heard coming from area 3g. The sligs notice the sounds but aren't distracted from the battle. (The fighting has disturbed the spirits of the dead hobgoblins.)
2. Ghostly images of hobgoblins swoop into area 3d and begin to soar over the heads of the combatants, sligs and PCs alike. The swooping and shrieking images cause no damage, but they are so distracting that all combatants suffer a -1 penalty to their attack rolls. The images cannot be attacked or otherwise dispelled; they continue to harass the combatants for the duration of the battle. When the battle subsides (that is, when one side has defeated the other), the images return to area 3g.
3. Two rounds after the images appear, the wild boar and half of the villager sligs panic (these are the villager sligs from 3d; if some of the villager sligs have already been killed, all but three sligs flee); once out of the cavern, they retreat into the wilderness and are not seen again. The slig champion, the slig warriors (from 3c), and the three remaining slig villagers aren't intimidated by the images and continue to fight. The champion and warriors fight to the death; they intend to kill every last PC.

AFTERMATH

If the PCs defeat the sligs, they can continue to explore the cavern. If they haven't done so already, they can search for treasure in area 3f.

The PCs may also remove the ears from the dragon corpse. Unknown to the PCs, the forces unleashed by the ghostly hobgoblin images have temporarily imbued the dragon corpse with supernatural energy. As soon as the PCs attempt to remove its ears, the corpse shudders to life, opens its jaws, and roars at them. It weakly lifts its front leg as if to claw at them, but the effort causes it to collapse in a lifeless heap. The dragon corpse causes no harm to the party, nor will it move again.

When the PCs leave the cavern, they find no trace of the sligs or wild boar who were chased away by the ghostly hobgoblin images. The only living creature remaining in the village is G'harr. If the PCs approach her again, they find her still at work preparing her noxious brew. If the PCs mention anything about their discoveries in the cavern, ask her what happened to the escaping sligs, or say anything else to her, she responds with a mad cackle and continues stirring her vat.



REUNION WITH ELLA

If the PCs return to Ella with the dragon ears, she eagerly accepts them, congratulating the PCs on a job well done. If the PCs failed to retrieve the ears (for instance, if the PCs were afraid to approach the dragon ears after the corpse moved), Ella is furious. Assuming the PCs cleared out the sligs, Ella demands that the PCs accompany her into the cave. Once there, she plucks the ears from corpse herself. She tells the PCs that because they failed to bring back the ears, their pay will be cut; she'll decide later exactly how much.

WHAT NEXT?

If the PCs haven't yet experienced the events of both Chapters 3 and 5, return to area 11 in Chapter 2. If the PCs have experienced both Chapters 3 and 5, proceed to Chapter 6 after completing this chapter.

TROUBLESHOOTING

If the PCs refuse to enter the cave. The PCs may decide to wait outside the cave entrance for the bucket-carrying woman to reappear. If so, Ella sends Grott to find out what's taking them so long. Grott tells the PCs that Ella demands they go in the cave right now, or she'll call off the entire mission and find some new employees.

If the PCs discover the vine curtain. If the PCs go through the vine curtain (3b) before they enter the main cavern (3d), the sligs in 3c screech for help. The boar and several sligs come running from area 3d, and the battle plays out as described.

CHAPTER 5: AHHAR

The events of this chapter take place in the village of Ahhar (area 29 in Chapter 2). Refer to the Ahhar map. Don't roll for Encounter Table encounters in this chapter.

DM's BACKGROUND

Fifty years ago, the entire human population of Ahhar was slaughtered in a hobgoblin invasion. The village stood empty for nearly four decades until a necromancer named Alemnya moved in and reanimated the dead villagers. Alemnya continues his magical research in Ahhar to this day, insulated from the disturbances of the civilized world.

Recently, Alemnya discovered that the large structure used by the undead of Ahhar as a resting place inadvertently had been built over the remains of a green dragon. Alemnya attempted to bring the dragon back to life, but his experiments backfired, transforming the deceased dragon into a mindless abomination that grew to immense proportions and took over the entire structure. Through a network of minions, Alemnya has spread the word that a handsome reward awaits anyone willing to come to Ahhar and destroy the creature. But so far, there have been no takers.

Erestem, the secret master of the dragon killers, also wants the creature dead. Erestem believes that the destruction of the creature will release a burst of mystical energy that she can use to help create a portal to bring in evil minions from other planes of existence.

GENERIC UNDEAD

Use the following statistics for the undead in this chapter. Feel free to vary the weapons and hit points.

Skeleton: AC 7; MV 12; HD 1; hp 7; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 (sword); SD sharp and/or edged weapons cause only half damage, immune to *sleep, charm, hold,* and *cold*- based attacks; AL N

Zombie: AC 8; MV 6; HD 2; hp 14; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8; SD immune to *sleep, charm, hold,* and *cold*- based attacks; AL N

ARRIVAL

Ahhar is a small village of abandoned shacks and dilapidated buildings shrouded by tall, leafless trees. Ella tells the PCs to investigate the village while she and Grott remain behind. She reminds them not to return without the dragon ears.

The village is silent and seemingly deserted. There are over a hundred buildings, evidence of a once-thriving society, but all have fallen into disrepair.

After the party has been in the village for about an hour, they notice the approach of a small group of stiff-legged figures led by a man dressed entirely in black. The group pauses when they see the party, then the man calls out to them. "Friends!" he cries. "Please wait!" As the group comes closer, the party sees that the stiff-legged figures are zombies; there are ten in all. Nine skeletons bring up the rear.

"You must be the dragon hunters," says the man, as his undead minions sway and groan behind him. "I am Alemnya. It was I who summoned you." He gestures to the undead. "These are some of my congregation."

Alemnya (9th-level necromancer): AC 10; MV 12; hp 23; THAC0 18; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4 (dagger) or spells; Str 10, Dex 9, Con 9, Int 17, Wis 17, Cha 8; SA victims suffer a –1 penalty when rolling saving throws against necromancy spells cast by Alemnya; SD gains +1 bonus when rolling saving throws against necromancy spells cast by other wizards; AL LN

Spells: 1st Level— *chill touch, comprehend languages, detect undead, read magic;* 2nd Level— *darkness 15' radius, detect invisibility, spectral hand;* 3rd Level— *feign death, hold undead, vampiric touch;* 4th Level— *contagion, enervation;* 5th Level— *animate dead*

Alemnya explains that he is a "researcher who prefers the quiet company of the undead to the loathsome prattle of the living. No offense intended to you, of course." He assures the party that the undead won't harm them, then he gestures for the party to follow him.

Alemnya leads the party to a large, stone structure on the outskirts of the village. "Apparently, it was intended by its builders to be used for storage. My congregation has found that it makes an ideal resting place. I find it to be a comfortable atmosphere in which to conduct my research." Recently, Alemnya discovered that one of the lower levels of the building had been constructed accidentally over the remains of a dragon. "Naturally, I attempted to revive the dragon, but something went wrong." The dragon remains were transformed into "a monstrous draconic creature that has taken over the entire building. I have been unable to destroy it, which is why I summoned you."

Alemnya approaches the front door to the building. "See for yourself." He cracks open the door just wide enough for the PCs to peer in. Filling most of the room is an immense claw, with shards of rotten flesh hanging over its greenish bones. The claw is attached to a thick greenish cord extending from a doorway in the opposite wall. The claw abruptly shudders to life, scraping its nails across the walls, then slamming against the floor and ceiling.

Alemnya closes the door. "Impressive, is it not?" Alemnya hasn't seen any of the creature aside from its claw, but he assumes its body fills the entire building. If the PCs ask about the layout of the building, Alemnya gives them a general description. If asked if any undead may still be in the building, Alemnya says he's sure the creature has destroyed them all. (Alemnya is wrong.) He has no helpful information about the creature. He has no equipment for the PCs, but he will supply them with torches. He will not allow any of his undead minions to accompany the party into the building. If the PCs destroy the creature, Alemnya promises them a reward of a dozen amethysts, each worth 100 stl.

ABOUT THE CREATURE

The creature, hereafter referred to as the Alemnya dragon, is a variation of the stahnk, a very rare type of undead beast found in remote areas of Krynn (see "Beast, Undead," in Volume Four of the *Monstrous Compendium* for details). The creature resembles an animated dragon skeleton with shards of rotting flesh hanging from greenish bones. When Alemnya activated the creature, it grew uncontrollably, its body stretching throughout the building as it tried to escape. Various body parts expanded to fill entire rooms. Though the parts have stopped growing, they are now too large to leave the rooms they currently occupy.

The various parts operate independently—for game purposes, think of each part as a separate monster. Destroying any of the parts has no effect on the remaining parts (with the exception of the skull—see area 10).

The parts of the Alemnya dragon are linked by flexible ligaments of tough greenish gristle. Each ligament is about two feet thick. A ligament can be severed by inflicting 10 points of damage at any point. A severed ligament spews black, oily fluid in a five-foot-diameter radius; all characters in this area must roll a successful Constitution check or suffer 1-2 points of damage.

The parts connected by a ligament are unaffected if the ligament is severed or otherwise damaged. For instance, if the ligament to the clawed foot in area 1 is severed, the clawed foot continues to attack.

Destroying a body part does not automatically sever its connecting ligament. For instance, if the clawed foot in location 1 is reduced to 0 hit points, the ligament attached to it does not spew black fluid.

The Alemnya dragon is a mindless killing machine. The parts are sensitive to motion and attack any character they can reach. The creature can be deactivated by destroying the skull, which in turn triggers a final manifestation of the dragon (see area 10).



Encounter Key

All walls, ceilings, and floors of the building are made of stone. There are no sources of natural light. The eastern door of location 1 is the only entrance. All doors are about five feet wide; they're unlocked and easily opened. Refer to the Ahhar map.

1. Entry Room

This room is about 20 feet square. A bony dragon foot about ten feet wide is attached to a ligament extending from the western doorway. When the eastern door opens, the foot thrashes and claws, but it doesn't appear to be able to reach the eastern door (actually it can, but it won't until the PCs are inside).

Alemnya tells the party he'll hold the door open while they quickly slip into the room. Once the PCs are inside, he closes the door behind them.

Once all of the PCs are in the room and the door is closed, the foot suddenly lurches at them; the flexible ligament enables the foot to reach anywhere in the room. The foot moves by pulling itself along the floor with its bony toes. It attacks by making sweeping rakes at random victims with its razor-sharp claws.

Alemnya Dragon Hind Right Foot: AC 6; MV 6; HD 4; hp 30; THACO 17; #AT 1; Dmg 2d6; SD immune to all nonmagical edged weapons; MR 20%; AL CE

The foot is too big to get through either door and is therefore unable to pursue. If the foot is reduced to 0 hit points, the bones and the flesh crumble to dust.

2. Stairway

This is a stone stairway that winds into the earth, leading to the second level. The stairway is about 60 feet long, five feet wide, and eight feet high.

2a. Crack: A wide crack in the ceiling conceals an ochre jelly.

Ochre Jelly: AC 8; MV 3; HD 6; hp 24; THAC0 15; #AT 1; Dmg 3d4; SD lightning bolt divides the creature into one or more smaller jellies, each doing one-half normal damage, fire- and cold-based attacks have normal effects; AL N

After all the PCs have passed beneath area 2a, the jelly begins to squeeze through the crack, a process that takes ten rounds to complete. The jelly will then ooze down the stairway and follow the PCs. Note that the PCs probably won't become aware of the jelly until it catches up with them; this is most likely to occur when the PCs are dealing with the trapped zombie (area 2b) or when the PCs reach the northern doorway of area 3.

If the jelly reaches the PCs, it tries to consume as many of them as possible. If the PCs elude the jelly, it devours the flesh of the zombie (2b), pauses at the bottom of the stairway, then oozes up and down the stairway for the next two hours. The jelly will not enter area 3 or area 1. When two hours have passed, the jelly seeps through the crack in the ceiling (2a), never to be seen again.

2b. Trapped Zombie: About 50 feet from the top of the stairway, a zombie is entangled in a ligament. The zombie claws vainly at the ligament wrapped around its foot and is unable to escape. The PCs can either destroy it (10 hp), slip past it (each PC rolls a Dexterity check; failure means the zombie gets to make an attack [THAC0 19, 1d8 points of damage]), or free it (need to inflict 10 points of damage on ligament to destroy it; zombie immediately attacks PCs).

3. Study

This large room has been reduced to rubble by the dragon parts extending from the western doorway. One of the parts is a bony dragon foot ten feet long that glows green. The other part is a bony tail about 50 feet long, sprawled across the floor. The tail and the foot begin to attack as soon as any PC enters the room.

Alemnya Dragon Hind left Foot: AC 6; MV 6; HD 4; hp 31; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 2d6; SD the glowing bones are very hot; a character touching a glowing bone with his bare hands suffers 1 point of damage; if the bones are touched with any inflammable object (such as a wooden staff), the object bursts into flame; immune to all nonmagical edged weapons; MR 20%; AL CE

Alemnya Dragon Tail: AC 6; MV see below; HD 5; hp 38; THAC0 15; #AT see below; Dmg see below; SD immune to all nonmagical edged weapons; MR 20%; AL CE

The ligament enables the foot to reach anywhere in the room. It moves by pulling itself along the floor with its bony toes, and it attacks random victims with its sharp claws. Because of its large size, it's unable to get through any of the doors and cannot pursue the PCs.

Every other round, the tail makes a violent sweep across the room; roll a separate attack roll against every creature standing or lying on the floor. A successful hit inflicts 2d6 points of damage. Observant PCs notice that the tail is unable to rise from the ground; therefore, any PCs who are two feet or more off the floor (for instance, if they can fly or climb walls) can't be attacked.

The foot and the tail won't attack each other. If the foot or the tail is reduced to 0 hit points, it crumbles to dust. The dust of the destroyed foot continues to glow, but it is cool to the touch and causes no damage.

4. Passage

Originally, this area was intended for storage, but Alemnya and his minions have never used it. A pack of five giant rats has made a nest in the southwest corner.

Giant Rats (5): AC 7; MV 12, Sw 6; HD ½; hp 3 each; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d3; SA disease (any victim bitten by a rat has a 5% chance of catching spotted fever within 1d4 hours, which causes him to make all attack rolls with a –1 penalty for the duration of the disease; a successful saving throw vs. poison prevents the victim from catching the disease, which otherwise runs its course in 1d4 days); AL N

A round after the PCs enter the passage, the hungry rats attack savagely, fighting to the death, though they will not leave the passage. If the PCs defeat the rats, they can search their nest to find 12 stl and a silver ring worth 100 stl (these items were lost by the building's original builders and were recovered by the rats).

5. Skeleton Dormitory

This large room has been reduced to rubble by the Alemnya dragon. An immense greenish rib cage fills the room. Three active skeletons are trapped inside the rib cage. The floor surrounding the rib cage is littered with the broken bones of destroyed skeletons.

Alemnya Dragon Rib Cage: AC 6; MV see below; HD 6; hp 37; THAC0 15; #AT see below; Dmg see below; SD immune to all nonmagical edged weapons; MR 20%; AL CE

Every other round, the rib cage springs open like a pair of giant jaws, attempting to scoop up all creatures in the room; roll a separate attack roll against every PC in the room who is not already trapped inside the rib cage. A successful hit inflicts 1d6 points of damage. Additionally, a successfully attacked victim must roll a saving throw vs. wands; if he fails the throw, he is ensnared inside the rib cage.

All PCs inside the rib cage are attacked by the ensnared skeletons (ensnared characters are immune to the attacks of the rib cage; however, ensnared characters can't attack the rib cage or each other during rounds when the rib cage is making attacks of its own). The skeletons cannot attack PCs outside the rib cage, nor can PCs outside the rib cage attack the ensnared skeletons.

The only way that ensnared PCs can escape from the rib cage is if the rib cage loses half of its hit points. Ensnared PCs can attack the rib cage, but they do so with a –3 penalty; there is no penalty if the ensnared PCs attack the ensnared skeletons.

When the rib cage loses half its hit points, it can still attack, but it can no longer ensnare victims. If the ensnared skeletons escape, they run to room 8. If the rib cage is reduced to 0 hit points, it crumbles to dust.

6. Zombie Room

The southern side of the door to this room is blocked by rubble that has fallen from the ceiling. If the PCs wish to enter this room, they'll have to clear away the rubble. Assume that one PC can clear away the rubble in 12 rounds, three PCs can clear it away in four rounds, etc.

There are five zombies inside the room. If the PCs open the door, the zombies attack the PCs and fight to the death. The zombies pursue the PCs into area 5 and also fight the PCs if they remain in area 6, but the zombies do not enter other areas. Note that if the rib cage in area 5 is still active, the zombies may get ensnared.

If the PCs explore area 6 after dealing with the zombies, they find nothing of interest.

7. Demolished Zombie Room

This room has been destroyed by the Alemnya dragon foot extending through the northern doorway. The foot is about 10 feet long and glows green.

Alemnya Dragon Front left Foot: AC 6; MV 6; HD 3; hp 22; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 2d4; SD the glowing bones are very hot; a character touching a glowing bone with his bare hands suffers 1 point of damage; if the bones are touched with any inflammable object (such as a wooden staff), the object bursts into flame; immune to all nonmagical edged weapons; MR 20%; AL CE

The foot attacks the PCs as soon as they enter. The ligament enables the foot to reach anywhere in the room. Because of its size, the foot is unable to get through either door and cannot pursue the PCs.

If the foot is reduced to 0 hit points, it crumbles to dust. The dust of the destroyed foot continues to glow, but it is cool to the touch and causes no damage.

8. Collapsed Room

The thrashings of the right front foot of the Alemnya dragon caused most of the ceiling here to collapse. The falling rubble reduced the foot to 0 hit points; the foot has crumbled to dust.

If any of the skeletons fled here after being freed from the rib cage in area 5, they attack the PCs as soon as the PCs enter. The skeletons fight to the death, but they do not leave this room.

There is nothing of interest here.

9. Stairway

This stone stairway winds into the earth, leading to the third level. The stairway is about 60 feet long, five feet wide, and eight feet high. Murky water fills the bottom of the stairway to a depth of about three feet.

10. Leaking Room

Dripping water from large cracks along the south wall has filled this room to a height of about three feet. A ligament trails down the stairway (area 9), submerging into the pool. Except for the steady sounds of dripping water, the room is silent and the pool is still.

A moment after the PCs appear in the doorway, an immense dragon skull bursts through the surface of the water, weaving like a cobra from the end of its ligament. The greenish skull is nearly ten feet wide. It has blazing red eyes and is covered with shards of rotting flesh; its ears are still intact. The skull opens its jaws wide and hisses at the party.

Alemnya Dragon Skull: AC 6; MV 9 (but only if attached to ligament); HD 4; hp 30; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6; SA tongue; immune to all nonmagical edged weapons; MR 20%; AL CE

The flexible ligament enables the skull to move anywhere in the room, including underwater. However, the skull is too big to move through the doorway.

The skull has a sticky tongue 15 feet long that it uses to draw victims into its jaws; unlike the skull itself, the tongue can extend into the stairway (area 9). The skull can make tongue attacks in the air and underwater with equal ease. The tongue strikes with a +4 bonus to its attack roll. If the tongue hits, the victim can attack it; if the attack succeeds, the skull releases the victim (who most likely falls in the water). If the victim's attack fails, the skull immediately drags the victim into its jaws, and the victim suffers 1d6 points of damage. For every round the victim spends trapped in the skull's jaws, he automatically suffers 1d6 points of damage. The victim can free himself if he rolls a Strength check with a –1 penalty. Two companions working together can free a trapped victim automatically. Attacks directed against the skull have a 20% chance of hitting the victim instead.

The skull attempts a tongue attack as soon as the party appears in the doorway. It continues with tongue attacks until it snares a victim, at which time it submerges and attempts to kill the victim. If the victim is killed, the skull attempts tongue attacks on new victims.

If the ligament attached to the head is severed, the head drops into the water (as always, the severed ligament spews black fluid in a five-foot-diameter radius; all characters in this area must roll a successful Constitution check or suffer 1-2 points of damage). The skull can no longer move, but it can still make tongue attacks.

If the skull is reduced to 0 hit points, it crumbles to dust; the rotten flesh remains intact. The PCs may retrieve the ears if they wish.

Five rounds after the skull is destroyed, the bone dust begins to turn into a greenish mist that rises from the pool and drifts up through the stairway. Likewise, the ligament turns to mist and also begins to drift up the stairs. If the PCs retrieved the ears from the skull, they also turn to mist.

At the same time, all of the ligaments and dragon parts throughout the building, regardless of whether the PCs destroyed them, turn to mist. The mist drifts toward area 5, as if it is being drawn by a powerful vacuum. Nothing the PCs can do will prevent this.

When another five rounds have passed, all of the mist has been drawn to room 5. Regardless of where the PCs are in the building, they hear deep, rasping roars from area 5.

Final Manifestation

If the PCs return to area 5, they see a bony creature the size of a small dragon clawing at the walls and bellowing in a deep, rasping roar. The creature is nearly 50 feet long, with shards of rotting flesh hanging from its green growing bones; its ears are intact. This is the final manifestation of the Alemnya dragon.

Alemnya Dragon Final Manifestation: AC 6; MV 9; HD 8; hp 60; THAC0 13; #AT 3; Dmg 1d8/1d8/2d6 + breath weapon three times per day (ice-cold cone of green fire ten feet long with a base diameter of two feet; victims must roll a successful saving throw vs. spell or suffer 2d4 points of damage and have the bones throb in his body for the next 2d6 rounds, causing his attack rolls to be made with a –1 penalty and his AC to be increased by +1 during that time; there are no additional effects if a PC is struck by the green flames while his bones are throbbing, though he still suffers 2d4 points of damage if he fails his saving throw vs. spell); THAC0 13; SD the glowing bones are very hot; a character touching a glowing bone with his bare hands suffers 1 point of damage; if the bones are touched with any inflammable object (such as a wooden staff), the object bursts into flame; SD immune to all nonmagical edged weapons; MR 20%; AL CE

The Alemnya dragon manifestation attacks the PCs on sight. It fights to the death, but it is too big to leave area 5, so it cannot pursue fleeing PCs. If the PCs defeat the creature, they can retrieve its ears; unlike the ears from the skull in area 10, these ears remain intact if the creature is reduced to 0 hit points (the creature collapses into a pile of bones if reduced to 0 hit points; it does not crumble into dust).

Aftermath

When the PCs emerge from the building, they find Alemnya eagerly awaiting their report. If the PCs defeated the creature, Alemnya is delighted and rewards them as promised (a dozen amethysts, each worth 100 stl). If the PCs were unable to defeat the creature, Alemnya is disappointed but thanks the PCs for their effort.

Reunion with Ella

If the PCs return to Ella with the dragon ears, she greedily accepts them, congratulating them on a job well done. If the PCs failed to retrieve the ears, Ella is furious. "You'll have to answer to my master for your incompetent bungling."

What Next?

If the PCs haven't yet experienced the events of both Chapters 3 and 4, return to encounter 29 in Chapter 2. If the PCs have experienced Chapters 3 and 4, proceed to Chapter 6 after completing this chapter.

Troubleshooting

If the PCs ask Ella to help them defeat the creature. Ella refuses. Grott won't help them either. If asked, Grott says that Angomeith strictly forbids contact with the undead during the current position of the moons.

Chapter 6: Kor Island and Beyond

This chapter takes place after the PCs have experienced the events of Chapters 3, 4, and 5.

DM's Background

The coordinators of the Taladas dragon killings are an Aurak draconian named Chorahh and an evil gnome cleric named Drishurocol. Erestem, the Queen of Darkness, is the mastermind of the plot to kill the good Othlorx (and the evil Othlorx who won't cooperate with her). Erestem is currently organizing an army of extraplanar creatures to assault the dragon leaders of Taladas.

Generic Gnomes

Use the following statistics for the gnome aides of Chorahh and Drishurocol.

Gnome Warrior (1st level): AC 5; MV 6; hp 5; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4 + 1 (war hammer); AL LE

Escort

After the party has experienced the events of Chapters 3, 4, and 5, Ella announces that the time has come to report to her master. With their mission complete, Ella resumes the leadership of the party. Ella takes the party to location A on the Indanalis shore line (see the DM's map on the inside cover of this adventure). If he wishes, the DM can forego Encounter Zone encounters and moon readings while the party makes its way to location A.

Once the party reaches location A, Ella produces a small object from her pocket. This device resembles a mechanical fish. Ella winds a key in the side of the object, which causes its fins to flutter. Ella sets it in the water, and it vanishes beneath the surface.

About an hour later, the water a few yards off shore begins to boil. A large metallic vessel breaks through the surface and moves toward the party. The oblong vessel is about 100 feet long with sharp fins on the sides, a huge rudder on the back, and a crystal bubble on the top. A gnome can be seen inside the bubble.

The vessel stops in the sand, and the bubble hatch opens. The gnome, who wears a gauzy face mask, gestures for the party to get in. "You are expected," he says. "Please hurry." Ella and Grott climb aboard, with the PCs following. The gnome gives each party member a face mask to wear during the journey "to help you breathe." (The masks filter out the impurities from the noxious Indanalis). As the party sits down on the cold metal floor at the bottom of the vessel, the gnome closes the hatch and adjusts a series of knobs and levers. The PCs hear water rushing into a chamber beneath them, followed by the sound of hissing steam. The vessel lurches back into the water and then descends.

The gnome pilot remains silent throughout the trip. If the party asks him any questions, he says, "My job is to bring you to the island. Not to talk."

Arrival

The ship resurfaces about two hours later, coming to rest on the shore of small rocky island (this is Kor Island; location B on the DM's map on the inside cover). The gnome pilot opens the bubble hatch and tells the party to get out.

The island appears to be little more than a solid column of stone, about 300 feet wide and 1,500 feet high. A huge building made of black marble rests atop the peak, which is shrouded in dark greenish mist.

The gnome leads the party to a platform near the base of the stone column, which is guarded by four gnomes. Many ropes and pulleys are attached to the platform and lead up to a collection of gears and poles near the building.

The gnome pilot ushers the party to the platform. He tells them that when they reach the marble building, they are to approach the entrance and tell the guards their names. As soon as the PCs position themselves on the platform, the gnomes pull the ropes, and the platform begins to rise toward the building.

As the platform rises, Ella mentions that when she and Grott were here before, they were reluctant to use the platform. "Our fears were groundless. Gnomish technology is truly remarkable." Ella then tells them to be on their best behavior when they meet Chorahh and Drishurocol. Ella won't answer any questions.

Audience

When the party reaches the top of the stone column, the platform stops. Just ahead looms the marble building, a hexagonal structure two storeys tall, with a single doorway made of dark crystal. Small windows covered with layers of gauze are evenly spaced along the sides of the building. (The second floor contains living quarters and storage areas. The events of this chapter are confined to the first floor, detailed on the map of Kor Island.)

Two gnome guards stand near the doorway (area 1). Ella identifies herself, and the guards open the door, ushering the party inside. The party enters a hexagonal reception area about 120 feet in diameter. The ceiling is about 30 feet high, imbedded with one-foot-diameter glass spheres enchanted with permanent *continual light* spells, bathing the room in a soft white glow.

The floor is covered with checkered pattern tiles of polished black and white marble. The walls are made of black marble, engraved with astrological symbols and unidentifiable geometrical patterns. Two of the walls (areas 2 and 3) are concealed by heavy black curtains. (If the PCs peek behind either curtain, they see a huge gray crystal plate with dark mist swirling inside it. The gray plate is actually a portal to the Ethereal plane that Erestem and Chorahh use to keep in contact with each other.) There are four small doors spaced around the room (7a, 7b, 7c, and 7d); the doors are locked.

Against the northern wall is a large marble desk (area 4). A lizard-like humanoid (an Aurak draconian) sits at the desk, studying a stack of parchments. He wears a flowing black cape and a steel bracelet around his left wrist. Next to the desk is a small marble alter (area 5) covered with a black silk cloth. A gnome kneels by the altar, deep in prayer. The gnome has wild white hair and a bushy white moustache. He wears a leather apron and a steel bracelet around his right wrist, similar to the bracelet worn by the draconian. (These are Chorahh and Drishurocol—see the Appendix for more information. If the PCs decide to attack them before the events of the "Confrontation" section, see the "Troubleshooting" section.)

Chorahh stands when he sees the party. He touches the

gnome on the shoulder to get his attention. "Gezele Ella and little Grott," hisses Chorahh. "You have many dragon ears for us, I hope. And who are your friends?"

Ella and Grott approach Chorahh and Drishurocol, gesturing for the PCs to follow them. Ella introduces the PCs by name, calling them "mercenaries."

"Mercenaries, are they?" Chorahh thoughtfully rubs his chin. "How strange that I've never heard of them. But then anonymity is the most underrated weapon in a mercenary's arsenal, is it not?"

"As you know," Chorahh continues, "we had only vague information about the sightings in the southern Steamwall. We wish to hear a full report regarding each of your assignments."

REPORTS

Chorahh begins by asking Ella if she was able to destroy the dragons in Pirim. If the party destroyed the red dragons, Ella proudly produces the ears, which Chorahh accepts. If the party failed to get the dragon ears, Ella mumbles, "There were some unexpected problems."

Regardless of whether Ella reports success or failure, Chorahh asks her for the details. Ella refers Chorahh to the PCs. Chorahh asks them the following questions:

- How big is Pirim? What is the dominant race?
- Was there anything unusual about the dragons?
- How did you defeat the dragons? (Or, how did the dragons defeat you?)

Chorahh accepts the PCs' answers without comment, carefully recording them on a parchment scroll. He insists the PCs answer each question.

At the end of the questioning, Chorahh asks Ella for her overall evaluation of the Pirim assignment. If she successfully completed the assignment, she says, "The underlings executed my plan exactly as directed. Success was inevitable." If she failed to complete the assignment, she says, "My plan was flawless. Unfortunately, my underlings were cowardly." If the PCs protest, Chorahh cuts them off. "You speak only with permission."

Chorahh then asks for identical reports about the assignments in Sargohgg (Chapter 4) and Ahhar (Chapter 5). When he's heard all the reports, he rolls up the scroll and ties it with a small silken cord. "Your reports are acceptable," he says.

"Would you be interested in additional work?" Chorahh asks. "There are still many dragons to be exterminated." Ella says she would relish the opportunity. "And you?" she asks the PCs. Regardless of how the PCs respond, Chorahh merely nods and rubs his chin.

"The threat of the dragons is as strong as ever," Chorahh continues. "No place is safe. Though our island is isolated and well-protected, you may be interested to know that we were the recent targets of a dragon attack."

Ella and Grott stiffen. Chorahh smiles. "The danger has passed. The assault was conducted by a small phalanx of copper dragons led by a number of self-proclaimed dragon knights, The dragons were slaughtered to the last. Only one of the knights survived, and he remains our prisoner."

Chorahh rises from the desk, "Perhaps you can identify him. Come." He leads Ella, Grott, and the PCs to a door (area 6) and opens it. Sprawled in the corner is a young man with sandy hair, his tanned face splotched with bruises and dried blood, his leather armor hanging in shreds. With great effort, the man props himself on one arm and stares at his visitors with glassy eyes. The PCs recognize him as the dragon knight Tavin Longspear (see the Prologue).

Neither Ella nor Grott can identify the battered knight. "How about you?" Chorahh asks the PCs. Regardless of how the PCs answer, Chorahh rubs his chin thoughtfully. but makes no comment.

Chorahh says it's time for Ella and Grott to collect their reward for the completion of their mission. "Let us discuss our negotiations in private," he says. He gestures at Tavin. "Our prisoner seems to have awakened. Perhaps your underlings would agree to keep an eye on him while we have our discussion?" Ella orders the PCs to stay with the knight until he returns. Chorahh, Drishurocol, Ella, and Grott leave the room, closing the door behind them.

REUNION

"My friends," Tavin gasps. "It's good to see you again." Tavin is struggling to stay conscious. PCs with healing spells or healing proficiency can aid Tavin, but he is still exhausted and barely able to move.

"You probably didn't expect to find me here," he laughs weakly. "I'm afraid I've been very foolish." Tavin says that about a week after he left the PCs in Trilon, he learned from an informant that the dragon killings were being directed from Kor Island. He and three other dragon knights and their copper dragons staged a surprise assault against the island. "But we were unprepared for such a strong defense. We faced an army of savage gnome warriors wielding bizarre devices that paralyzed our dragons, causing them to drop like stones from the sky."

Tavin says that in the battle, they managed to destroy all of the gnomish weapons and most of the gnome warriors "but the cost was high. I was the only survivor."

If the PCs express sympathy, Tavin shakes his head. "There is no time for sorrow. The threat may be greater than we ever suspected, and we must take action. Otherwise, Gabus and my companions died for nothing."

Tavin explains that after the battle, Chorahh and Drishurocol took him prisoner. Since being captured, Tavin has overheard conversations between Chorahh and Drishurocol that have led him to believe that the plot against the Othlorx may be more serious than previously assumed. "If I heard correctly, the master of the dragon hunters is none other than Erestem herself." (If the PCs are unfamiliar with Erestem, Tavin fills them in. "Erestem is the Queen of Darkness, an evil goddess of nearly unlimited power. She longs for nothing less than domination of all creation. She dwells in an alternate plane of existence, promoting her schemes in our plane through a host of evil minions. She can appear in any form she wishes. Her most common form is that of a five-headed dragon.")

Tavin believes that Erestem plans to recruit an army of extraplanar creatures to invade Taladas from the Ethereal plane. "Her goal is the destruction of Amanthus and the other good Othlorx," says Tavin. "But I'm not certain if preparations are already underway. It is crucial that we know. If Erestem is not recruiting at this time, it would be a waste of our limited forces to invade the Ethereal plane to try to stop her. But if Erestem is preparing to strike, we must mobilize our forces immediately."

Tavin says that Chorahh and Drishurocol have been in regular contact with Erestem via a portal in the reception area. "The portal is behind the curtain hanging over the southwestern wall (area 2). To activate the portal, you must strike together the steel bracelets worn by Chorahh and Drishurocol. Obviously, you'll have to take the bracelets by force; Chorahh and Drishurocol aren't likely to give them up voluntarily."

Once the portal is open, the party can enter the Ethereal plane and see for themselves if Erestem is preparing to strike. "Return immediately with your information. If there are no signs of a strike force, we will continue to fight the dragon hunters on Taladas. But if Erestem is readying her minions,



then we will mobilize our forces and invade the Ethereal plane."

Tavin admits he's not sure how they will get the information to the Othlorx once the PCs return from the Ethereal plane. "I was hoping that reinforcements would've arrived here by now," he says. "But in any case, you must first find out what's going on in the Ethereal plane. When you return, we'll figure out a way to get the information to the Othlorx."

Tavin warns them to make sure to use the portal on the southwestern wall (area 2). "There is a second portal in the southeastern wall (area 3). Chorahh and Drishurocol use it to dispose of the bodies of their enemies. Stay away from it."

If the PCs have questions at this point, Tavin answers as follows:

The Ethereal plane is vast. How will we know where to search for Erestem and her minions? "From what I've overhead, I believe that there should be evidence of her minions immediately on the other side of the portal."

If we see Erestem and her minions, should we attack them?
"They are far too dangerous. Return at once, and we will find a way to recruit help."

Who are your reinforcements? "I told friends about the assault. They said they would follow if I didn't return. Apparently, they have been delayed."

Should we wait for reinforcements before we try to enter the Ethereal plane? "Too risky. Time is of the essence. And my friends may never show up."

Can you come with us? "I would like to, but in my condition, I would be a hindrance." (True.)

After the PCs have been with Tavin for about 20 minutes, the door opens and Chorahh enters. "I trust our prisoner hasn't been any trouble," he says. "Now leave him and come with us. We have a reward for you as well." Chorahh ushers the PCs from the room, closing the door after him.

CONFRONTATION

"Ella and Grott didn't thank me for their reward," says Chorahh. "I hope your manners are better."

The PCs notice that Drishurocol is standing behind his altar (area 4) holding an immense device resembling a long metal tube connected to a tangle of pipes, knobs, and antennae. "Another gnomish invention," says Chorahh, gesturing to Drishurocol. "Perhaps Drishurocol will demonstrate it later. For now, I thought you might like to say good-bye to your employers."

Chorahh leads the PCs to the southeastern wall (area 3) and pulls back the curtain to reveal a gray crystal plate about 20 feet tall and 15 feet wide. Dark mist swirls inside the plate. Tiny images of Grott and Ella tumble in the mist. Their arms flail helplessly as they gradually recede in the distance. If the PCs ignore Tavin's warning about this portal, see the "Troubleshooting" section).

"I congratulate you on your charade," says Chorahh. "However, I am not as easily fooled as Ella and Grott. We have been tracking you for some time. Our agents are everywhere. We know who you are."

He closes the curtain, then turns to face the party. "Ella and Grott may prove useful in the future. We can always retrieve them if necessary. You, on the other hand, have no value. Your lives are over."

Chorahh signals to Drishurocol who touches a switch on his tube device. The device begins to hum. Seconds later, doors 7a, 7b, 7c, and 7d swing open. A tiny mechanical man made of tin totters through each doorway and advances toward the PCs. The mechanical men are crude representations of gnomes; each wields a six-foot-long steel pole that crackles with electricity. Two gnome guards enter the room from area 1. Both are armed with war hammers. They lock the door behind them.

Chorahh withdraws to the northern end of the room. "Attack!" he cries, taking his place beside Drishurocol to observe the battle.

Drishurocol's Mechanical Men (4): AC 4; MV 9; HD 4; hp 19 each; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 2d6 (electrical pole); SA eye flash, fire jet (see below); SD explodes when reduced to 0 hit points (see below); AL N

The gnomes and the mechanical men attack the PCs savagely, intending to fight to the death. Neither Chorahh nor Drishurocol participates in the early rounds of the battle; Drishurocol is using the battle to demonstrate the effectiveness of his mechanical men to Chorahh.

Drishurocol controls the actions of the mechanical men with his tube device. A magical gem in the tube transmits his mental commands to similar gems inside the heads of the

mechanical men. The gems are precisely attuned to Drishurocol's brain; for that reason, no one else can use the tube device. Because of the intense concentration required, Drishurocol can take no other actions while controlling the mechanical men.

The mechanical men use their electrical poles to attack PCs who threaten either Chorahh or Drishurocol (the poles are fused to the mechanical men's bodies, so the men can't be disarmed; note that if a PC is wearing the belt of *protection from electricity* given by Tavin in the Prologue, he is immune to the electrical poles). Each mechanical man can also attack with an eye flash and by breathing a jet of fire; each of these attacks can be used only once. The eye flash causes a burst of bright light in a ten-foot-radius; all characters in this area have a 50% chance of being blinded for the next 1d4 rounds. The jet of fire can be directed at any single victim within ten feet; the victim suffers 2d6 points of damage (roll a successful saving throw vs. dragon breath for half damage).

When a mechanical man is reduced to 0 hit points, it explodes in a shower of gears, springs, and shrapnel. Any character within a five-foot radius of an exploding mechanical man has a 70% chance of being struck by shrapnel and suffering 1d6 points of damage. Any character from five to 25 feet away from the explosion has a 20% chance of being struck by shrapnel and suffering 1d4 points of damage.

If Drishurocol loses his concentration (for instance, if a PC attacks him, or casts *sleep* or a similarly debilitating spell on him), the mechanical men stop dead in their tracks; they cannot move or attack until Drishurocol resumes control. If Drishurocol loses half or more of his hit points, he is too weak to maintain concentration, and the mechanical men no longer function. (Alternatively, the PCs can disable the mechanical men by directly attacking Drishurocol's tube device. Assume the device has an AC of 5; if it suffers 10 points of damage, it crumbles into a pile of junk, and the mechanical men no longer function). If Drishurocol's mechanical men are disabled, he savagely attacks the PCs with his dagger. He fights to the death.

Chorahh enters the battle when two of the mechanical men have been disabled or after he is attacked by a PC, whichever occurs first. Chorahh attacks with his energy blasts and sulphur clouds, supplementing his attacks with a *fire wall* spell. If the opportunity presents itself, he uses *change self* to duplicate the appearance of a PC (in hopes of confusing the party), attempts to use *mind control* on a PC and order him to attack his companions, and uses *suggestion* to convince a PC that the mechanical men are about to explode, and he must flee the citadel immediately. Chorahh fights to the death.

If the PCs are on the verge of losing the battle, see the "Troubleshooting" section. Otherwise, if the PCs defeat Chorahh and Drishurocol, they can take their steel bracelets (each has a value of 200 stl).

Activating the Portal

The PCs can activate the portal (area 2) by drawing back the curtains, standing within ten feet of the gray crystal, and striking together the steel bracelets from Chorahh and Drishurocol. It's not necessary for the PCs to wear the bracelets in order to use them to activate the portal, nor do they need to be held by two different PCs.

One round after striking the bracelets together, the gray crystal begins to glow with a dim blue light. The swirling mist in the crystal gradually clears, revealing an endless expanse of gray space. Small islands of black rock float by in the distance.

The crystal shimmers and vanishes, leaving an open doorway into another world. If the PCs peer into the portal, they see a vast, barren plain of black dust; if the PCs enter the portal, proceed to the "Into the Ethereal Plane" section.

About the Ethereal Plane

The DM may find the following information helpful for staging the remaining events of this adventure. (Those wishing more detail are refered to pages 60-72 of the Manual of the Planes hardback book).

Physical Description: The Ethereal plane is an endless expanse of other-dimensional nothingness, occupied by variously sized islands of rocky matter. The Ethereal material is very clear, and vision is unimpaired up to its physical limits.

Movement: The Ethereal plane has no gravity, though objects retain their normal masses and can be thrown at normal velocities. PCs can move by pushing themselves off larger objects; for convenience, assume that a PC moves 100 feet per round if he launches himself in this way. Turning can be accomplished only by pushing in a different direction off another solid object.

PCs can also move by mentally willing themselves to travel in a specific direction. The maximum speed possible by this method is 30 feet per round per Intelligence point (for example, a PC with an Intelligence of 10 has a maximum speed of 300 feet per round). Sudden stops and changes in direction and speed occur at will with no ill effects. For convenience, assume that a PC realizes he has the ability of mental movement if he rolls a successful Intelligence check (and that PC can tell his companions about their mental movement abilities).

Time: Subjective time flows more slowly in the Ethereal plane that it does in the Prime Material plane. So slow is Ethereal plane time that physical travelers don't feel the need to breathe.

Into the Ethereal Plane

A tingle ripples through the PCs' bodies as they step through the portal. A moment later, they find themselves standing on a vast plane of black dust. The plane is flat and featureless. Small chunks of black rock drift silently though the bleak gray sky.

The air is cool and dry. The PCs notice they are no longer breathing, yet are suffering no ill effects. Their bodies seem weightless, as if they were suspended in water. If a PC takes a step, he rises from the ground as if he were floating (see the "Movement" section above).

From their new perspective, the portal now resembles a window. The surface of the portal resembles clear glass, but it is as hard as diamond (it's beyond the resources of the PCs to shatter the portal surface). The PCs can see through the portal back into the reception area they just left. The portal no longer glows; if the PCs wish to pass through again, they'll have to activate it with the bracelets. If the PCs examine the opposite side of the portal, they see it resembles a panel of gray crystal with swirling mist.

A few minutes after their arrival, the PCs notice a disturbance in an immense bank of clouds several miles away. Silent bolts of red lightning pierce the clouds, which slowly part to reveal a floating island of black rock. The island appears to be thousands of feet long and perfectly flat. Hundreds of bizarre creatures roam aimlessly across the island. Some of the creatures resemble gigantic worms with spindly pincers. Others appear to be huge, egg-shaped eyeballs with long tails and leathery wings. There are also dozens of enormous dragons, their long necks craning into the sky.

A black cloud materializes over the island, pulsating and swelling until it dwarfs the largest creature below. A crack of red lighting dissipates the black cloud, revealing the image of



a loathsome five-headed dragon, each head a different color. “Pay tribute to your master!” thunder all five heads in unison. “Bow before the power of Erestem!” The creatures huddle in a mass below the five-headed dragon, their heads bowed low, their pincers and tails writhing excitedly. The black cloud swirls and expands, soon enveloping the entire island in darkness. Just as Tavin feared, Erestem is rallying an army of extraplanar creatures to invade Taladas. (If the PCs attempt to move closer to Erestem’s island for a better look, see the “Troubleshooting” section.)

The PCs’ attention is drawn to a movement in the portal. Back in Chorahh’s reception area in the Prime Material plane, the PCs see four warriors dressed in chain mail examining the destroyed mechanical men. The PCs recognize one of the warriors as Derry Althen (whom they met with Tavin in the Prologue); the others are dragon knights. Derry spots the portal, then motions for her companions to join her. She pounds on the portal surface and gestures frantically at the PCs to come back to the reception area. Though the PCs can see her clearly, no sounds transmit through the portal.

If the PCs use the bracelets to activate the portal, the portal surface begins to glow (if they don’t use the bracelets, see the “Troubleshooting” section). Proceed to the Epilogue.

Troubleshooting

If the PCs search the rest of the marble building. After the PCs defeat Chorahh and Drishurocol, they may decide to search the rest of the building. They find nothing of interest, aside from Drishurocol’s astrology books and construction materials for the mechanical men.

If the PCs attempt to attack Chorahh and Drishurocol prior to the events of the Confrontation section. Chorahh, Drishurocol, Ella, and Grott rally to defend themselves against such an attack. The PCs are captured (if necessary, assume that Drishurocol has a gas bomb that puts them all to sleep) and imprisoned with Tavin; the rest of the chapter plays out as described.

If the PCs go after Ella and Grott. If the PCs choose to ignore Tavin’s advice, they can activate the southeastern portal (area 3) with the steel bracelets. If the PCs step through, they find themselves hovering in an empty void; Ella and Grott have vanished into the distance. There is nothing for them to explore here, and they can return to the reception area by activating the portal again with the bracelets. (Ella and Grott turn up again in the final module of the trilogy, *Dragon’s Rest.)*

If the PCs are losing the battle in the Confrontation section. Assume that a piece of one of the demolished mechanical men (or if none of them have been demolished, use a piece that dropped off during the battle) shudders to life and begins to spray sparks in random directions. Chorahh picks it up to throw it, and it explodes, sending powerful bolts of electricity through his body, destroying him.

If Drishurocol is still active, assume the exploding piece from the mechanical man triggers a reaction in his tube device; the device also explodes, destroying Drishurocol.

If the PCs decide to investigate Erestem’s island. Inform the PCs that the island is receding into the distance, drifting farther from the PCs every moment. If the PCs still attempt to investigate it, the entire island slips into a portal before the PCs can get close; the portal then disappears.

If the PCs don’t use the bracelets to return to the Prime Material plane. If the PCs were careless enough to leave the bracelets in Chorahh’s reception room, or they lost them after the entered the Ethereal plane, assume that one of Derry’s fellow dragon knights knows a way to activate the portal from the Prime Material side.

EPILOGUE

The following events occur immediately after the end of Chapter 6. If you plan to continue with the third module of this series, go to the "Adventure Continues" section. Otherwise, use the "Adventure Ends Here" section.

THE ADVENTURE ENDS HERE

Because of the strange nature of time in the Ethereal plane, it takes 15 minutes for the portal to function after it's been activated by the steel bracelets. When 15 minutes have passed, the entire surface of the portal glows blue. A tingle ripples through the PCs' bodies as they step through the portal. A moment later, they find themselves standing again in Chorahh's reception area.

DEBRIEFING

"You've returned!" exclaims a delighted Derry when the PCs step through the portal. "I was afraid you were lost forever! Where were you? How did you get there?"

"Give them a break, Derry," says a familiar voice. The PCs see the smiling Tavin entering from the door on the opposite side of the room, assisted by two dragon knights. "We'd just about given up hope. You've been in there for five days." If the PCs seem puzzled, Tavin explains that time passes more slowly in the Ethereal plane. "A few minutes in there are like several days out here."

Tavin says that a day after the PCs entered the portal, Derry and three dragon knights arrived at the island. They had defeated the few remaining gnome warriors and gathered up Chorahh's notes and records, but they were unable to figure out a way to breach the portal. "All we could do was watch and wait."

Tavin asks the PCs what the PCs found out in the Ethereal plane, his eyes narrowing when they tell him that Erestem is indeed assembling a strike force of extraplanar creatures. "Then we must prepare for battle," he says grimly. "We have not a moment to waste!'

Tavin says the knights rode four copper dragons to the island. "They're circling the building," says Tavin, "to make sure we're not disturbed." Tavin says they can ride the dragons back to Cloud Mesa and inform Amanthus about the Dark Queen's plan.

REUNION WITH AMANTHUS

The trip to Cloud Mesa is uneventful. The dragons fly as fast as they can, staying high above the clouds to avoid detection.

The party finds Amanthus in his human form, waiting in the main chamber of his lair. He thanks the copper dragons and the knights for their efforts, then dismisses them.

Amanthus turns his attention to the PCs, asking them for a full report. When Amanthus hears about Erestem and her strike force, he shakes his head sadly. "The danger is worse than I feared. Many dragons will spill their blood before this threat is resolved."

"But that is not your concern," says Amanthus to the PCs. "You have completed your mission with courage and honor. On behalf of the good Othlorx, I offer my thanks."

Amanthus summons a bronze dragon aide who enters with a steel chest. The dragons sets the chest before the PCs, then departs. "Your reward," says Amanthus. "Just as we agreed." The chest contains the exact monetary reward promised for the successful completion of the mission (Amanthus and the PCs negotiated this amount in the "Meeting with Amanthus" section of the Prologue). Amanthus says they can keep the chest as well, which has a value of 300 stl. Additionally, Amanthus gives them each a black diamond worth 500 stl and a flask containing three doses of *potion of dragon sight.* (The potion enables the drinker to see at three times his normal range of vision during the day. At night, he has the equivalent of infravision with twice the normal range. While under the influence of the potion, a character suffers no range penalties for long-distance attacks with missile weapons. The effects of the potion last for 1-2 hours.)

Several bronze dragons appear in the entryway. "My aides will take you wherever you wish to go," says Amanthus. If the PCs ask if they can do anything else to help, Amanthus says, "You've helped enough already. From here on, the battle belongs to the Othlorx."

THE ADVENTURE CONTINUES

The PCs cannot immediately pass through the portal. Because of the strange nature of time in the Ethereal plane, it takes 15 minutes for the portal to function after it's been activated. Meanwhile, Derry continues to pound on her side of the portal, urging the PCs to hurry.

Shortly after the PCs activate the portal (but well before 15 minutes have passed), the PCs notice a bulbous creature approaching them from the enshrouded island of Erestem. As the creature nears, they see that it resembles a fat, egg-shaped ball covered with matted black fur. The five-foot-body is supported by a pair of leathery wings tipped with razor-sharp talons. A long rat's tail dangles from the back of the body. A single, bulging eyeball, nearly four feet in diameter, dominates the body. The eyeball is black with a blood-red pupil that continuously leaks thick blue fluid.

Eyewing: AC 4; MV Fl 24 (B); HD 3; hp 20; THAC0 17; #AT 3 or 1; Dmg 1d6/1d6/1d4 (claws and tail) or eyewing tears; SA blinks eyewing tears (normal attack roll; victim must be within 100 feet), victim must roll a successful saving throw vs. poison or suffer 2d6 points of damage (success means only 1d6 points of damage); tears may also splash onto anyone within ten feet of the victim (splashed victims must roll a saving throw vs. poison; those who fail suffer 2d4 points of damage, those who succeed suffer 1d4 points of damage); SD immune to all cold-based attacks, can see with perfect accuracy for up to 25 miles, has infravision out to 120 feet); AL LE

The eyewing circles the party once, then attacks with a dripping tear. It swoops low, attempting to slash random PCs with its claws. The eyewing fights to the death.

Two rounds after the eyewing's appearance, the party's attention is drawn to a bright light in the portal; in an attempt to open the portal, one of the dragon knights has inadvertently triggered a defense mechanism installed by Drishurocol. A moment later, the portal crumbles into thousands of tiny pieces. The pieces dissolve in a puff of smoke, leaving the PCs stranded in the Ethereal plane.

The eyewing continues its attacks. In the distance, the PCs see a swarm of eyewings heading toward them from the enshrouded island. There are dozens, perhaps hundreds, of eyewings in the swarm.

The PCs hear a ripping sound just overhead. The attacking eyewing—if still alive—is startled by the sound and withdraws about 50 yards. A three-foot-diameter hole has appeared in the sky, glowing with a soft green light.

A long metallic cord descends from the hole and hovers over the party. All of the PCs hear the same voice in their heads, a low hissing whisper. "Climb," says the voice "or die here."

. . . To be continued. . . .

UNANSWERED QUESTIONS

Even with the defeat of Chorahh and Drishurocol and the discovery of the Dark Queen's plan, questions still remain.

- What is Erestem going to do with the extraplanar creatures?
- Will Amanthus be able to rally the Othlorx to stop Erestem?
- What happened to Ella and Grott?

If you don't plan to continue with this series, you may wish to answer these questions in adventures of your own design. Otherwise, these and other questions will be explored in the final module, *Dragon's Rest.*

APPENDIX

DRAGON KNIGHTS

BACKGROUND

Dragon knights are a character class unique to the lands of Taladas. Their bond with dragons is without parallel. Although scattered groups of dragon knights exist throughout Taladas, their numbers are greatest in the Conquered Lands.

Humans who pioneered the wilderness of the Conquered Lands knew that copper dragons had once been common in the rocky uplands, yet as settlements grew, the absence of these creatures became increasingly evident. Unknown to the settlers, the formerly chaotic good dragons had sworn neutrality and become Othlorx, the Uninvolved, withdrawing completely from people and dragonkind alike.

Among young, unattached pioneers and seasoned wilderness explorers, the tales of abandoned dragon lairs and treasure hordes were quite appealing. Such tales were supported by the occasional discovery of an inhabited lair and the liberation of the treasure within it. The curious and the greedy were lured into the highlands of the Conquered Lands in search of dragons and treasure. A handful returned with tantalizing reports of dragon sightings and a few close encounters.

Still, persons with cunning and perseverance were sometimes able to contact the Othlorx. The Othlorx responded with violence to intruders who attacked them, but were patient with those who approached them with courtesy. The Othlorx explained that once their territory was discovered, they could not allow intruders to go free to spread the news. If intruders perceived this as a threat and attacked, the Othlorx killed them. However, the intruders who chose to stay were invited to join the community of dragon knights that had grown up in symbiotic relationship with the copper dragons of the Conquered Lands.

Today, dragon knights live with the Othlorx out of mutual affection and respect. Dragon knights dwell in solitude, sharing only the company of the dragons and their fellow knights. Their existence is not intentionally kept secret, but copper dragons have so little to do with the rest of the Conquered Lands, and the knights live in such isolation, that few outsiders realize they exist.

Dragon knights originally dwelled in the rocky caverns that served as lairs to the Othlorx, but as their numbers grew, some moved into the surrounding valley floors and built small communities. Where space permits, however, knights prefer to live in caverns near their dragon companions. These are usually side caverns and rocky hollows too small or too narrow to permit use by the dragons, but which connect to the larger dragon lair.

Knights and dragons pair off with unspoken agreements born of mutual rapport. Older dragons are choosier and take longer to pair, while the more impulsive younger dragons tend to make their choices immediately. However, since there are few hatchling and very young copper dragons in the Conquered Lands, most knights form bonds with mature adult or older dragons. Once paired, the companions remain with each other for life. New partners are taken only if the original dies, and then only following a months-long period of mourning.

The dragons, ever curious and inquisitive, learn any practical or philosophical knowledge their partners have to teach them. In turn, dragons teach their knights how to ride in flight, give them useful tips about airborne combat, and share their knowledge of ancient lore, magic, and dragon language. A dragon knight learns these things in stages, gaining skills as he advances in experience. Because of this tutorial method of learning, knights are likely to become skilled in the same nonweapon proficiencies mastered by their dragons.

A dragon knight's word is his bond, and he will fulfill his promises or die trying. However, he only obligates his dragon companion in dire emergencies.

A dragon knight maintains a strict code of honor and goes to any length to remove all vestiges of shame he believes he has incurred. He accords his companion dragon with the same honor and respect due any person.

Though knights come from many different backgrounds, most have adopted a common style of dress, grown out of the necessities of riding flying dragons. Most wear warm undergarments, along with trousers and long-sleeved tunics of tanned leather. Leather bracers protect the wrists and keep the sleeves from flapping loosely in the wind. Close-fitting leather caps are popular, lined with wool or fur and often fitted with ear flaps for additional warmth at high altitudes. Gloves and hard-soled, thigh-high boots protect the knights from the abrasive edges of dragon scales.

Most men are clean-shaven, with their flowing hair tied back in a braid and their moustaches long and drooping. Women braid their hair in a similar fashion.

PLAYER CHARACTERS AS DRAGON KNIGHTS

A player character who wishes to gain the skills of the dragon knight can be of either sex and any class. He must also meet the following requirements:

1. He must be human, elf, or half-elf.
2. His alignment must be compatible with that of his dragon; Othlorx only tolerate knights who are of neutral or neutral good alignment.
3. He must have the following minimum ability scores (Othlorx do not tolerate long-term relationships with characters who are less insightful, intelligent, or charming than this): Intelligence 12, Wisdom 12, Charisma 12.
4. The dragon must accept the character as a partner. There is a 50% chance of acceptance by any given dragon, modified as follows:

+/– the character's reaction roll modifier.

–2 for every step the character's alignment differs from the dragon's alignment (keeping in mind condition number 2 above).

+1 for contributing treasure to the dragon's horde, as long as the treasure is worth 1,000 stl or more (this is a noncumulative modifier; that is, no matter how much the character contributes to the horde, the modifier will not increase above +1).

If a PC meets these criteria, he can become a dragon knight. The basics of training are completed in a number of months equal to 24 minus the character's Intelligence. Although the training itself takes a relatively short period of time, pursuit of this profession implies a life-long commitment to the dragon. This commitment precludes the character from ever seeking another professional class. (If the character has other class skills, he becomes a dual-classed character unable to advance in his previous profession.)



Although the age range of the available dragons plays a part in determining which dragons are matched with which characters, as a rule a character should be matched with a dragon of similar maturity. For instance, a mature adult human or elf pairs best with a mature dragon. Since dragons age much more slowly than people, the knight will soon be much older than the dragon (from the dragon's point of view), but the initial bonding is best achieved if both dragon and knight are similarly mature.

Dragon knights use the warrior's experience point table for advancement, the warrior's THAC0 progression, and the warrior's proficiency slots and nonweapon proficiency groups. However, dragon knights begin with only three weapons of proficiency and are limited to armor no heavier than chain mail. They do not use shields or swords, but they may use any type of pole arm or missile weapon. One of their initial weapon proficiencies must be the lance.

Special Skills

As they advance in levels, dragon knights gain the following special skills:

Level 1:

• Dragon riding proficiency at no cost.
• Uses a lance while on dragon-back with no flight to-hit penalty.
• Immune to dragon awe.

Level 3:

• Uses a preferred missile weapon from dragon-back with no flight-to-hit penalty.
• Immune to dragon fear.
• +1 to his dragon riding proficiency.

Level 5:

• Gains a proficiency in one dragon tongue at no cost, (This must be the language of the character's dragon partner, unless that language has already been learned.)
• +1 to hit with a lance when fighting from dragon-back.

Level 6:

• +1 to dragon riding proficiency.

Level 7:

• +1 to hit with his preferred missile weapon when fighting from dragon-back.

Level 8:

• Gains a proficiency in one dragon tongue at no cost, or may improve a proficiency by +1 in any dragon tongue already known.

Level 9:

• Gains a proficiency in ancient history at no cost.

Spells and Dragon Magic

Characters who were previously wizards can begin to learn dragon magic once they have reached 6th level as a dragon knight. This means that any spell known by a dragon that his knight is capable of learning can be acquired by the knight and entered into his spell book. It is up to the DM to determine if and when the dragon offers to share a spell in the course of adventuring together.

Additionally, there are several unique spells developed by dragon knight wizards. These can be learned whenever the DM determines that the character has the opportunity to acquire such a spell. These spells include the following:

1st Level

Dragon Tongues (Alteration)
Range: 0
Components: V, M
Duration: 1 round/level
Casting Time: 1
Area of Effect: 30-foot radius
Saving Throw: None

This spell bestows the same language abilities as *tongues,* but it can be learned at a lower level and only gives knowledge of the languages spoken by dragons.

2nd Level

Dragon Message (Alteration)
Range: 0
Components: V, S, M
Duration: 5 rounds/level
Casting Time: 2
Area of Effect: Special
Saving Throw: None

This spell is similar to *message,* but it is intended to be used in flight to enable one dragon knight to communicate with a dragon or another knight. It is not necessary to whisper the message; regardless of the tone of voice or the volume of the wind, the message is clearly heard by the recipient. As long as there is a clear line of sight, the caster need not point to the recipient.

3rd Level

Dragon Fall (Alteration)
Range: 100 yards/level
Component: V
Duration: 500 yards of fall/level
Casting Time: 3
Area of Effect: Special
Saving Throw: None

This spells is similar to *feather fall,* but it is designed to be cast on dragons with the intention of saving a dragon injured in flight from plummeting to the ground. The spell enables the caster to affect one age class of dragon for every level of the caster. For instance, a 7th-level dragon knight wizard can cast this spell on any dragon up to mature adult in age. As with other dragon knight spells, *dragon fall* does not work on other creatures or objects.

Eye-Shield (Invocation/Evocation)
Range: Touch
Components: V, S, M
Duration: 1 hour/level
Casting Time: 3
Area of Effect: Creature touched
Saving Throw: None

This spell causes the targeted creature's eyes to be protected from all effects that impair vision, although there is no tangible barrier before the creature's eyes. A knight protected by this spell suffers no penalties to his vision or attack rolls due to the glare from the sun or from spells such as blindness.

Wings (Alteration)
Range: Touch
Components: V, S, M
Duration: 1d6 turns + 1 turn/level
Casting Time: 3
Area of Effect: Creature touched
Saving Throw: None

This spell causes the targeted creature to sprout a set of wings resembling those of a dragon. The creature can then fly at a rate of 18 (maneuverability class B). The wings spring from the character's shoulder blades. They do not appear if armor, clothing, or other restricting material is in the way.

Selected NPCs

Gezele Ella

9th-Level Fighter, human female
Str 18/13, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 17, Wis 15, Charisma 9; AC 1; MV 12; HD 9; hp 55; THAC0 12; SA +3 damage adjustment (from exceptional Strength); AL LE

Weapon Proficiencies: Club (specialized), dagger, battle axe, sling, short sword

Nonweapon Proficiencies: blind-fighting, endurance (14), survival (17)

Languages: Thenolian, Auric (17), Boki Gnomish (17), Ilquar Goblin (17), Hoor (17), Kothian (17)

Equipment: banded mail armor and *cloak of dragon scales,* club imbedded with steel needles (dmg 1d6 + 3), *dagger +1,* battle axe

Also known as "Big Ella," Gezele Ella is one of the most notorious and cunning criminals in all of Taladas. Originally from Thenol, Ella began her life of crime with the robbery and murder of her uncle, a Thenol priest, when she was only 12 years old. Before she could be apprehended, Ella fled into the wilderness, embarking on a crime spree that lasted nearly 20 years.

Five years ago, Ella was finally captured in Kristophan and charged with poisoning the horses belonging to the New City livestock dealers. Ella had planned to corner the market in horse trade by eliminating the competition and killed more than 800 horse before she was caught. Prior to her execution, Ella bribed her guards and escaped. The Kristophan authorities conducted a search but were unable to locate her. To avoid embarrassment, the authorities manufactured a story that Ella died in prison from a fever plague.

Ella kept a low profile for the next few years, terrorizing small communities throughout Northern and Southern Hosk. She acquired a partner along the way, an exiled goblin shaman named Grott, who shared both her religious convictions and her love of wealth.

Ella is a solidly built woman over seven feet tall and weighing nearly 300 pounds. She has long gray hair that frames her beefy face and dangles in thick curls around her shoulders. She has thin lips, dark green eyes, and plump cheeks. She wears banded mail armor covered by a bulky cloak made of dragon scales of various colors. She carries a huge club studded with steel needles. A silver pendant hangs from her neck, molded in the shape of a bony claw, a symbol of Angomeith, her deity. (Angomeith is another name for the evil god Nuitari.)

Some years ago, Ella extorted the secrets of mind control from an elven wizard. After she'd mastered these secrets, she murdered the wizard so his secrets would be hers alone. Ella's mind control makes her completely resistant to *ESP,* magical scrying devices, and all other types of mental probes.

Ella is ruthless, cunning, and indifferent to the suffering of others. Though she has the appearance of a barbarian, she is surprisingly eloquent and cultured, with a particular fondness for poetry and art. She is deeply religious, utterly devoted to Angomeith, her name for Angomais, the god of evil.

Grott

7th-Level Cleric, male goblin shaman
Str 8, Dex 7, Con 7, Int 12, Wis 14, Cha 6; AC 8; MV 9; HD 7; hp 30; THAC0 16; SA *spook* up to five times per day (functions identically to the 1st-level spell of the same name); SD immune to the heat from lava; AL LE

Weapon Proficiencies: dagger (specialized), sling

Nonweapon Proficiencies: agriculture (12), astrology (12), cooking (12), religion (14), spellcraft (10)

Languages: Ilquar Goblin., Thenolian (12), Tamire Elf (12)

Equipment: leather cloak (functions as leather armor), dagger, sling, 20 sling bullets

Spells: 1st Level— *bless, detect magic, endure cold/endure heat;* 2nd Level— *detect charm, speak with animals, spiritual hammer;* 3rd Level— *feign death, protection from fire;* 4th Level— *tongues*

A goblin shaman originating from the village of Crourk in the Ilquar Mountains, Grott is a loyal disciple of Angomeith (another name for Angomais, the god of evil; he is also known as Nuitari). As is the tradition in his family, Grott studies the positions of Krynn's three moons every night to receive prophecies and information from Angomeith. About ten years ago, Grott perceived a message in the moons directing him to poison the water supply of his village; Angomeith had decided that the citizens of Crourk were no longer worthy of his protection. Grott followed Angomeith's instructions, resulting in the death of the entire population of Crourk. Grott then headed south, as directed by the moons, eventually forming a partnership with Gezele Ella who shared his religious convictions and love of wealth.

Grott is barely three feet tall. He has deep red skin, tiny yellow eyes, and a flat face with pointed ears and a wide mouth. He wears a floor-length robe and a narrow headband, both made of black leather. He wears a claw-shaped silver pendant, a symbol of Angomeith.

When he was born, Grott was anointed with a special mixture of herbs and powders by his father, giving him permanent immunity to the heat of lava. Once per year, Grott's religious convictions compel him to sit at the base of an active volcano and meditate. Grott believes this ceremony cleanses him in the eyes of Angomeith (in fact, the ceremony has no actual benefits, nor does missing the ceremony cause any ill effects).

Grott is soft-spoken, anxiety-ridden, and indecisive, totally dependent on Ella (and Angomeith) for guidance. His love of Angomeith is matched only by his love of money. In spite of his evil tendencies, Grott has a strong sense of honor; he always keeps his word.

Chorahh

Aurak Draconian
Str 18, Dex 13, Con 15, Int 16, Wis 9, Cha 5; AC 0; MV 15; HD 8; hp 37; THAC0 13; SA +2 damage adjustment (from exceptional Strength), see below; SD see below; MR 30%; AL LE

Weapon Proficiencies: dagger (specialized), short sword

Nonweapon Proficiencies: blind-fighting, hunting (8), running (9), tracking (9)

Languages: Auric Draconian, Thenolian (16), Auric (16), Boil Gnomish (16), Hoor (16)

Equipment: dagger, short sword

About five years ago, Erestem recruited the savage Chorahh from the Estwilde wilderness in Ansalon, then transported him to Taladas to serve as her liaison. Ruthlessly ambitious, Chorahh has devoted his life to the Dark Queen, who has promised him a section of Krynn to rule as his own in return for his service.

Chorahh has golden scales, pupil-less black eyes, and long spines protruding from his skull. He wears a flowing black cape and a steel bracelet around his left wrist.

Although Chorahh is skilled with the dagger and short sword, and can also slash and bite with his claws and fangs (dmg 1d4/1d4/1d6), he prefers to attack with his energy blasts, which cause 1d8 + 2 points of damage to targets up to 60 feet away. Because he can generate blasts from each hand, he can attack twice per round. He can also exhale a five-foot-diameter noxious sulphur cloud three times per day; victims caught in the sulphur cloud suffer 2d10 points of damage and are blinded by its spittle for 1d4 rounds (a successful saving throw results in half damage and no blindness).

Additionally, Chorahh has the following special abilities: become invisible at will; polymorph into any animal his size, three times per day; change self three times per day to perfectly imitate any human or humanoid he has ever seen (the effect lasts for 2d6 + 6 rounds); use infravision to 60 feet; detect hidden and invisible creatures within 40 feet; cast *dimension door* three times per day, up to a range of 60 yards;

Optional Player Characters

Cobos the Lame Elf, Level 7 Ranger

STR 16, INT 10, WIS 14, DEX 14, CON 15, CHA 17; AC 8; HD WA7, hp 49; #AT 3/2, Dmg by weapon (+1 for STR); AL CG; THAC0 14; HS 53%, MS 60%.

Weapon Proficiencies: composite short bow, light lance, saber, thrown dagger, javelin, mace.
Nonweapon Proficiencies: horsemanship (17), navigation (8), survival (10), tracking (16), hunting (13).
languages: Tamire Elvish, Auric (10), Uigan (10).
Cobos wears leather mail and a small metal cap in the form of a falcon's head, the spirit totem of his clan. He is equipped with four throwing javelins, a dagger, a composite short bow of layered horn, a mace and a *saber +2.* Cobos wears *boots of varied tracks* and has a *potion of superheroism.*

Harlin Reiver Half-Elf, Level 6 Fighter

STR 10, INT 14, WIS 12, DEX 17, CON 13, CHA 7; AC 1; HD WA6, hp 36; AL CG; THAC0 15.

Weapon Proficiencies: long bow (specialized), short sword, hand axe, halberd, sling
Nonweapon Proficiencies: blind fighting, bowyer/fletcher (16), dancing (17), charioteering (19).
languages: Thenolian, Auric (14), Hoor (14), Kothian (14).
Harlin wears *chain mail +1.* He is equipped with a long bow and 10 +1 arrows, a short sword, a hand axe and a sling. Harlin wears a *ring of free action* on his left hand, and carries a *rope of climbing* in his pack.

cast *ESP* and *wall of fire,* each once per day (as a 4th-level wizard); see through all illusions; +4 bonus to all saving throws; mind control one creature of equal or fewer Hit Dice once per day for 2d6 rounds (this ability enables Chorahh to control the actions of the victim as if it were his own body; the victim can avoid the effects of *mind control* by rolling a successful saving throw vs. spell); cast *suggestion* an unlimited number of times per day (Chorahh must concentrate for a full turn, taking no other actions, to use this ability).

If Chorahh is reduced to 0 hit points, he does not die. Instead, an aura of green flames surrounds his body and he enters a fighting frenzy (+2 bonus to attack and damage rolls). Anyone coming with three feet of the flames suffers 1d6 points of damage (no damage if the victim rolls a successful saving throw vs. petrification). Six rounds later, or when Chorahh reaches –20 hit points, he transforms into a spinning ball of lightning, striking once per round as a 13-Hit Dice monster, causing 2d6 points of damage. Three rounds later, the lightning ball explodes, stunning all within a ten-foot radius for 1d4 rounds. Those within a ten-foot radius also suffer 3d6 points of damage (no saving throw). Items within the range of the explosion must roll successful saving throws vs. crushing blows or be destroyed.

Chorahh is a merciless killer, experiencing the agony of his victims as an almost physical pleasure. Fascinated by Drishurocol's skill at creating destructive inventions, Chorahh took him on as a partner. When Erestem completes her conquest of Krynn and Chorahh has no further use for Drishurocol, Chorahh plans to kill him.

DRISHUROCOL

6th-Level Cleric, male gnomoi
Str 6, Dex 6, Con 5, Int 18, Wis 13, Cha 4; AC 5; MV 9; HD 6; hp 19; THAC0 18; SD see below; AL NE

Weapon Proficiencies: short sword (specialized), dagger

Nonweapon Proficiencies: engineering (15)

Languages: Boli Gnomish, Ilquar Goblin (18), Thenolian (18), Tamire Elf (18), Hitehkel Gnomish (18), Auric (18)

Equipment: mismatched armor (giving him an effective AC of 5), dagger, short sword

Spells: 1st Level— *detect magic, invisibility to undead, purify food and drink;* 2nd Level— *detect charm, know alignment, resist fire/resist cold;* 3rd Level— *locate object, speak with dead*

Though trained as a cleric, Drishurocol was one of the most brilliant inventors in the village of Hurhskoplotrip, specializing in weaponry and golem-like mechanical men. Though ordered to abandon his research and devote himself to his clerical studies, he defied his superiors and proceeded with the invention of a device he believed would enable the village to fly through the air like a bird. While Drishurocol watched from a safe distance, he activated the device and the village rose into the sky. A moment later, it came crashing to earth, killing the entire population.

A few months later, Drishurocol was recruited by the draconian Chorahh, who not only encouraged Drishurocol's research, but supplied him with ample numbers of human, elven, and dwarven subjects on whom he could experiment.

Drishurocol has beady pink eyes, wild white hair, and a bushy white moustache. He wears a leather apron over a set of mismatched armor pieces. He is a gnome of few words, but mutters to himself constantly while working on one of his many inventions. He is oblivious to the suffering of other living creatures, whom he regards as fodder for his experiments and nothing more. A follower of Angomais, the god of evil (whom he calls Angothorolupolis; he is also known as Nuitari), Drishurocol prays at a small portable altar made of marble three times per day, asking for inspiration to create new inventions.

GEOGRAPHY NOTES

Following are excerpts from Volume Five of the Geography of Taladas *by Mell Ahagale, discussing some of the villages on the eastern side of the Indanalis Sea shown on Map 1, but not detailed in the text of this adventure.*

"There are five major hobgoblin villages in this area: Horrak, Ghah, Abo, Kannis, and Ellog. Of the five, Horrak is the largest with over 800 residents. Ghah, the smallest, has a population barely exceeding 200. Abo is near one of the area's largest volcanoes, Mt. Kreew; the residents worship Mt. Kreew as a god, conducting bizarre rituals in its honor. The residents of Kannis are said to be exceptionally vicious, while the hobgoblins of Ellog are rumored to be unusually friendly.

"Four major gnomoi settlements exist in this area, all constructed as tower cities. Boligarthoft is the largest, located in a relatively isolated region south of Yahmetnachmaru. The gnomoi of Schymonarke are said to excel in the design of unusual weaponry, while the technologists of Twiggskoonhania specialize in vehicular and agricultural inventions. The Erndonbovill residents apparently are less inventive than other gnomoi; it is speculated that polluted water supplies have modified both their personalities and physical appearance in strikingly unusual ways."

OPTIONAL PLAYER CHARACTERS

Harlin is a Thenolite. He is in his mid-30s, standing tall and straight-limbed, with straight red-brown hair and squinting brown eyes. This fighter is the cast-off bastard son of a Thenol lord, denied by his family because of the embarrassment his existence would bring their political marriage ties. Resentful of his circumstances, Harlin left Thenol when he was threatened with conscription as a common soldier.

For the past several years he has made a living as an arena fighter in Kristophan in the Minotaur League, where he learned to drive a chariot and fight blind. In spite of his arena experience, Harlin considers himself an accomplished bowman, and uses the long bow as his weapon of preference.

This fighter is constantly gambling away his earnings, for he loves gaming but is not highly skilled at it. Harlin is unreligious, with no interest in Bishop Trandamere, internal Thenolite cults, or political affairs. He is reluctant to speak of his homeland to others, and angrily overreacts to anti-Thenolite comments.

Harlin is evasive about his personal history. He is unflappably calm in the midst of hectic events, and is most comfortable following rather than giving orders.

This fierce nomad warrior is a native of northern Hosk. Cobos left his tribe in disgrace when he lost his temper and accidentally slew an opponent he was dueling to first blood. Cobos has spent years wandering the grasslands of Hosk, selling his services to traders and merchants, and guiding the occasional party of adventurers into the steppes.

Cobos is in his early adulthood, but has finally lived long enough that he is beginning to long for home and family, the roots he has eschewed for so long. He believes that if he proves his worthiness and atones for his earlier dishonor, his clan will have no choice but to take him back. The unlikelihood of this is evident to all but Cobos himself. The elf is fierce, arrogant, proud and stubborn. He is easily angered and quick to fight, and loves foolhardy risks, which he believes prove his bravery.

Cobos is 5'5", 140 pounds, with honey-tan skin and brown-blond hair. He wears his hair in a single braid behind, with side braids by each temple. A poorly mended ankle, once broken, gives him an awkward limp and is the source of his nickname.

PALISSARA *6th-level Human Bard, female*

STR	11	**DEX**	16	**CON**	14	**AC**	7	**THAC0**	18
INT	15	**WIS**	12	**CHR**	15	**AL**	NG	**HP**	26

Weapon Proficiencies glass darts, sling, short sword.

Nonweapon Proficiencies Shining Land history (15), reading/ writing (16), gaming (15), chimeboard (musical instrument) (15), juggling (15), singing (15).

Languages Panak, Auric (15), Boli Gnomish (15).

Bard Abilities CW 95%, DN 40%, PP 30%, RL 15%.

Spells 3 1st, 2 2nd.

Special possessions Shining Lands indoors sandsuit (AC 9), outer sandsuit (in pack), obsidian darts, chimeboard (horax shell with suspended obsidian chips), *potion of healing, decanter of endless water.*

See back of card for more information.

CHYRUB *8th-level Minotaur Fighter, male*

STR	18/20	**DEX**	12	**CON**	14	**AC**	3	**THAC0**	13
INT	16	**WIS**	8	**CHR**	11	**AL**	LG	**HP**	47

SA #A 3/2, Dmg 2d4 (butt foes over 6'), 1d4 (bite) or by weapon (+3 for ST); Size L (7' 5"); THAC0 includes +1 for ST.

Weapon Proficiencies heavy crossbow (specialized: 1/1), battle axe, hand/thrown axe, two-handed sword (specialized: 2/1).

Nonweapon proficiencies Armorer (14), weaponsmithing (13).

Languages Kothian, Auric (16).

Special possessions armor (hurdu-skin; AC 6 without it), and oversized sword (one-handed, 2d4 (2d8 vs. L); two-handed, 3d4 (3d8 vs. L)) both of which he made.

See back of card for more information.

BUCKERAN *6th-level Kender Thief, male*

STR	16	**DEX**	14	**CON**	11	**AC**	6	**THAC0**	18
INT	12	**WIS**	12	**CHR**	16	**AL**	NG	**HP**	24

Weapon Proficiencies hoopaui, bo stick, dart. Listed THAC0 includes ST +1.

Nonweapon Proficiencies juggling (13), jumping (16), ventriloquism (10), cooking (12).

Languages Marak Kender, Auric (12), Fianawar Dwarvish (12).

Thief Abilities PP 70%, OL 75%, FRT 10%, MS 50%, HS 65%, DN 20%, CW 65%, RL 0%.

Special Possessions *studded leather +1, dart of homing, potion of speed.*

See back of card for more information.

SULDRUN *7th-level Elf Cleric (Elf Clan Shaman), female*

STR	13	**DEX**	10	**CON**	12	**AC**	4	**THAC0**	16
INT	17	**WIS**	17	**CHR**	13	**AL**	NG	**HP**	35

SA able to change into a black bear at will, but suffers 1d6 damage each time she does so. As a bear, AC 7; MV 12; HD 3 + 3, 24 HP; Size M; #AT 3, 1d3/1d3/1d6 (claws and bite); SA if a claw hits with an 18 or better, also hugs for 2d4; THAC0 17.

Weapon proficiencies lasso, sling, staff.

Nonweapon proficiencies ancient history (16), animal lore (17), elf clan history (13), singing (13), herbalism (15).

Languages Ancient Elvish, Tamire Elvish (17), Ilquar Goblin (17), Auric (17), Uigan (17), Hoor (17).

Spells 5 1st, 5 2nd, 3 3rd, 1 4th.

Spheres Major: All, Animal, Charm, Divination, Healing, Plant; Minor: Combat, Protection.

Special possessions *gauntlets of swimming and climbing,* colorful *cloak of protection +4.*

See back of card for more information.

DALEMONT HALF-HAND *4th-level Human Thief/ 3rd-level Mage (Dual Class), male*

STR	12	**DEX**	15	**CON**	15	**AC**	7	**THAC0**	19
INT	17	**WIS**	16	**CHR**	17	**AL**	NG	**HP**	18

Weapon Proficiencies thrown dagger, staff.

Nonweapon Proficiencies appraising (17), disguise (16), religion (16), spellcraft (15), acting (16).

Languages Auric, Kothian (17), Hoor (17), Thenolian (17).

Thief Abilities PP 20%, OL 15%, FRT 35%, MS 40%, HS 35%, DN 20%, CW 80%, RL 25%.

Spells 2 1st; 1 2nd

Special possessions druid's priestly robe which functions as a *+2 ring of protection, ring of mind shielding, philter of glibness, silver dagger +1.*

See back of card for more information.

LIVIA THE SHREWD *7th-level Gnome (gnomoi) Mage (Illusionist specialist), female*

STR	14	**DEX**	16	**CON**	8	**AC**	4	**THAC0**	18
INT	14	**WIS**	8	**CHR**	8	**AL**	LG	**HP**	23

Weapon Proficiencies dagger, sling.

Nonweapon Proficiencies rope use (16), brewing (14), ancient history (13), engineering (11), direction sense (9)

Languages Boli Gnomish, Auric (14), Panak (14).

Spells 5 1st, 4 2nd, 3 3rd, 1 4th.

Specialist Can learn no Necromancy, Abjuration, or Invocation/ Evocation spells; is +1 to save vs. Illusions; others are –1 to save vs. her Illusions.

Special Possessions *necklace of missiles, wand of illumination,* scroll of *protection against plants,* scroll containing three 1st-level spells, bracelets which function as *bracers of defense AC 6.*

See back of card for more information.

Suldrun is from one of the Wolf Clans, among the vainest and most savage of all elves. From birth she proudly followed the ancient way of the Wolf—until a vision from a Bear *quoyai* changed her life. The Bear told her that her clan has no other *quoyai,* and that the shaman who pretends to guide her people is a fake; she had to flee for her life when she tried to relate that message to her people.

Now the Bear has told her that she must grow strong before returning; that when she is sufficiently powerful, she will be able to atone for her clan and drive the false shaman out.

Ever looking forward to that day, she has sacrificed much for the Bear, denying herself more than one love and an easy living elsewhere. The Bear has insisted that she not eat any female flesh, as a sign of her devotion; on those occasions when she has done so accidentally, her powers have left her until the Bear felt she was sufficiently chastened.

Suldrun is always adorned with a colorfully conspicuous elf clan wardrobe, defying those who would deny her calling, and proudly proclaiming her heritage. She often dons what seem to be a pair of bear paws while adventuring; they are actually her gauntlets. (If she has them on when she transforms into a bear, she is able to use their powers in her ursine form as well.) Beneath her bright red and black patterned tunic and cloak, she wears leather armor. What she tells no-one is that the cloak, like the gauntlets, is a gift from the Bear.

She stands 5' 4", with burnished tan skin and sleek black hair, which is tied into a bun.

Palissara is a sandwoman from the Shining Lands desert wastes. Her inquisitive nature keeps her traveling among strange folk and distant lands, although she plans one day to return to the Shining Lands. Her travels have broadened her perspectives; she is easily adaptable to strange circumstances and is very difficult to offend. She is a friendly, outgoing person who is eager to speak with strangers, and quick to diffuse trouble with a joke or a song.

Palissara's appearance is all the more striking because few sandpeople are seen outside the Shining Lands. Like her kinfolk, Palissara is tall and slender, standing 5' 10" and weighing 130 pounds. Her arms are exceptionally long, with hands reaching almost to her knees. Her high cheekbones are prominent, her nose small but sharp. Palissara's skin is a deep red-brown, her eyes bright blue. Her white hair is worn tied back in a long ponytail. She is unused to armor or protective clothing of other sorts, and wears none.

Palissara naturally assumes men will treat her as an equal and considers herself their peer in all ways. The bard works constantly on expanding her repertoire of song, lore, and oral history. Palissara prefers to sleep in small enclosed spaces and becomes noticeably uneasy when weather clouds move in and she is exposed out in the open.

Dale began his career as a wizard, but became disenchanted with the amount of work required to become a great mage. After a workshop accident caused the loss of two fingers on his right hand, he resigned that profession to become a rogue. Dale, a dual-classed human, now uses his rogue skills to convince others he is a priest. The wizard- rogue likes the awe and special privileges accorded to magic-wielding clerics; in fact, he would actually like to be the druid he pretends he is. Dale Half-hand poses as a druid dedicated to Habbakuk.

Half-hand's con game is a convincing one. If called upon to spellcast, he laments that his spells are exhausted for the day, or that he is performing penance and may not spellcast. If pressed, he creates magically-glowing auras while going through the motions of priestly mumbo-jumbo, then bemoaning the fact that his spell apparently misfired, or the target saved against its effects.

Dale's adventuring companions do not realize that he is not the druid he seems to be. He acts as a druid in all regards, and is quick to claim he has performed magic without obvious effects. For example, he may declare that he knows a person's alignment, or has just cast a *bless* spell on the party, enhancing this claim with dancing lights glowing briefly on the "blessed" targets.

Half-hand is daring and loves risks, but is unhappy about his continuing deception of partners he has come to like and respect. Yet he is fearful of confessing the truth, so for the time being he continues his ruse.

Chyrub, third son of a Horned House, was quite happy as a blacksmith until the day a beautiful heifer strolled into his smithy—one look into those soft brown eyes, and he knew he was in the kind of trouble that he would never get out of. Much to his dismay, she turned out to be a princess of the Imperial Family, and the Emperor was not impressed when a blacksmith sought his daughter's hand.

To get rid of Chyrub, he sent him for a very specific bride price—a gnomoi *instant fortress,* a Thenolian *vampiric regeneration ring,* and something called a *gateway whistle* or *whistle of the planes.* With few resources of his own, Chyrub decided the best way to travel would be to join the Legions of Aragas.

It was a mistake. He served his hitch, then set off on his own. Stealing is out of the question; to compromise one's integrity, even for love, is beneath any right-thinking minotaur. He was able to acquire an *instant fortress* as thanks for a favor he recently did the gnomes; he had just left that for safe-keeping with his truelove when he received Baron Rathwyck's call.

Chyrub is not overly tall for a minotaur, but his years at the forge developed even further his already massive muscles—he weighs over 380 Ibs. His fur is a deep, almost shiny black. Chyrub's horns are each 26" long, and are one of his greatest sources of pride. While helping the gnomes, he stood too near a (barely) controlled explosion; all sense of taste and smell has temporarily left him. He is the epitome of the best and worst of Taladas' minotaurs: arrogant and haughty, yet fair-minded and absolutely honest.

Livia is one of the Bilo gnomes, those of the pillar country near the Shining Land. She came to the western lands on the same trading expedition that brought Palissara out of the Shining Lands. The two have traveled together for years.

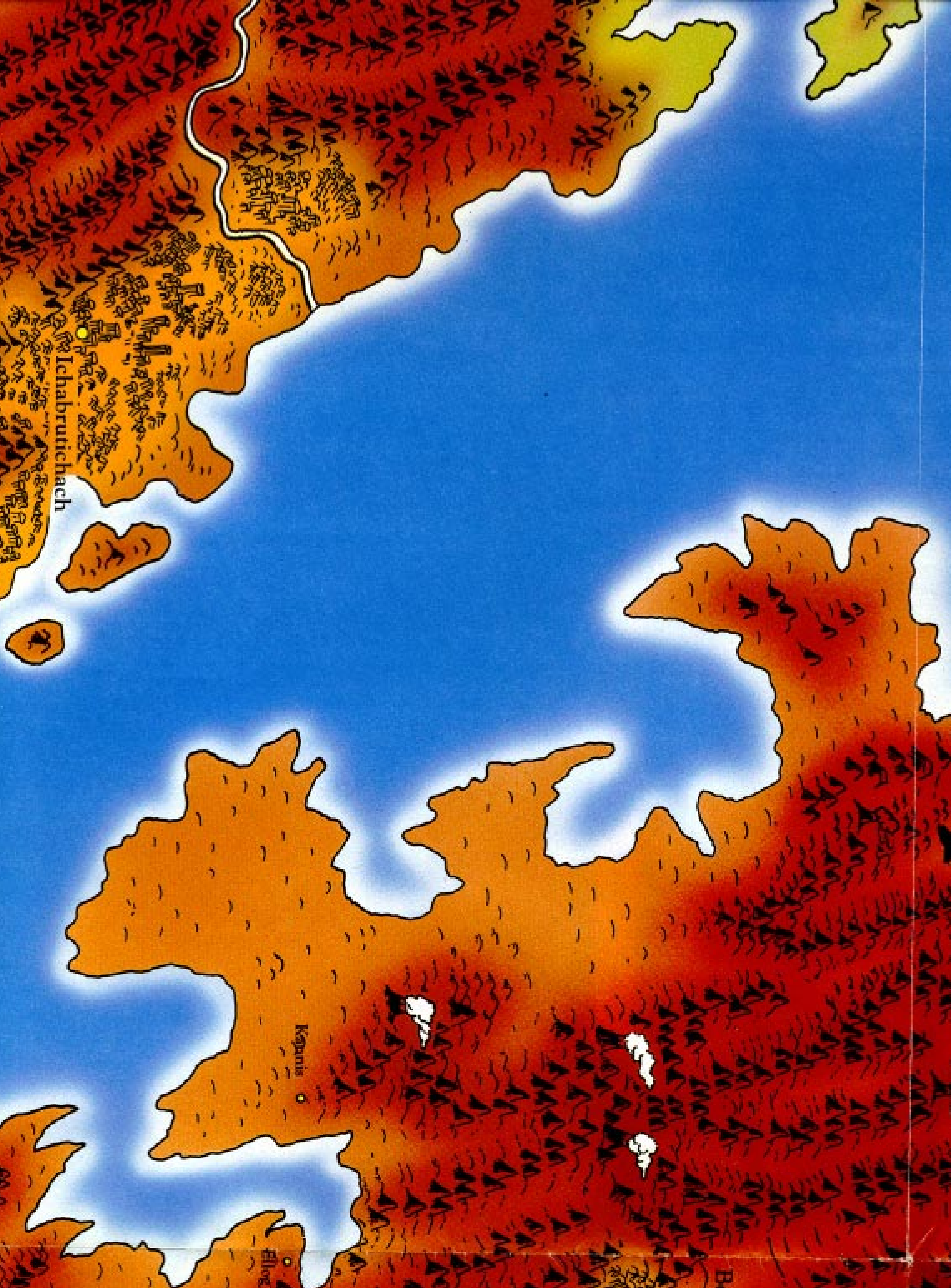
Livia is stern of demeanor, with a dry sense of humor and cutting wit. She is a respected figure in the group and influential in decision making. She seldom mentions it, but Livia searches for knowledge which will help her people capture the Tower of Flame in the midst of Hitehkel.

Livia is adventuresome at heart, holding herself out of fights only with an effort. The illusionist stays back to survey a situation and see how her magic can be of most assistance. Often her shouted warnings and observations (e.g., "you can flank him from the side!") have helped her comrades win the day.

Buckeran is called Bucker for short, or "Bicker" by his much-put-upon companions. This Marak kender from the Steamwall region is full of gloom and doom, always foretelling ominous events and unhappy consequences. When new to this group of adventurers, the kender was at first suspicious and reserved, but over time has come to accept his companions. Now Bucker eagerly argues with them to convince them of their imminent failures. In spite of his pessimism, Bucker does his utmost to save his fellows from themselves, with the result that the kender's efforts and daring often make the difference between the party's success and failure.

Bucker is taller and more slender than a gnome, with a pointed chin, sloping nose, and straggly long hair braided in a topknot. His innate pessimism wars with a kender's natural cheerfulness, giving Bucker an expression constantly suspended halfway between worry and hopefulness. His high arched brows emphasize this dubious expression; strangers often mistake the look for a personally questioning one. Bucker refuses to talk to such people, leaving his companions to intercept irate strangers intent on pounding respect into the kender.

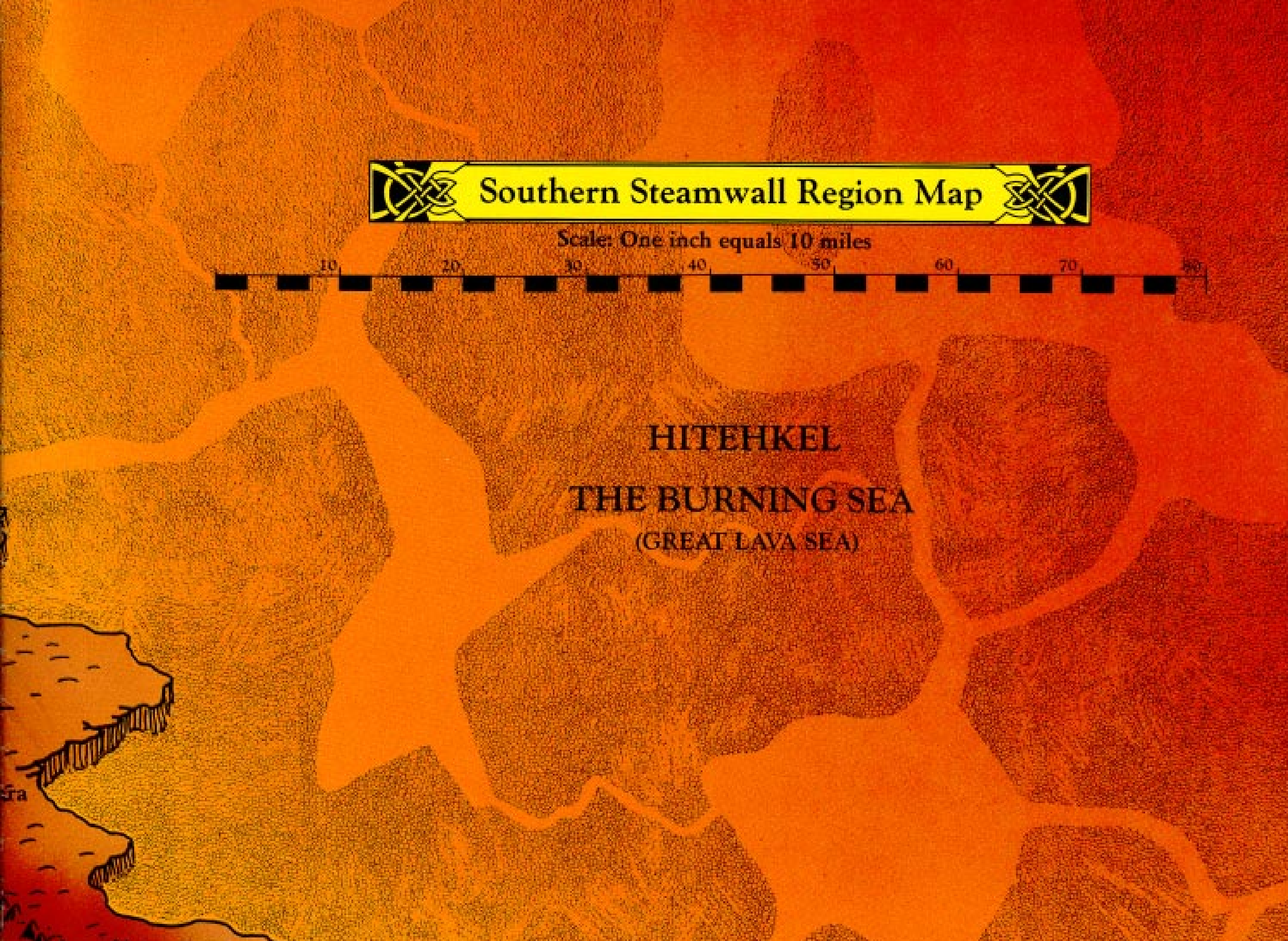

Jaggachsteromias
Voerttraggaru
Kralmomehudersezra

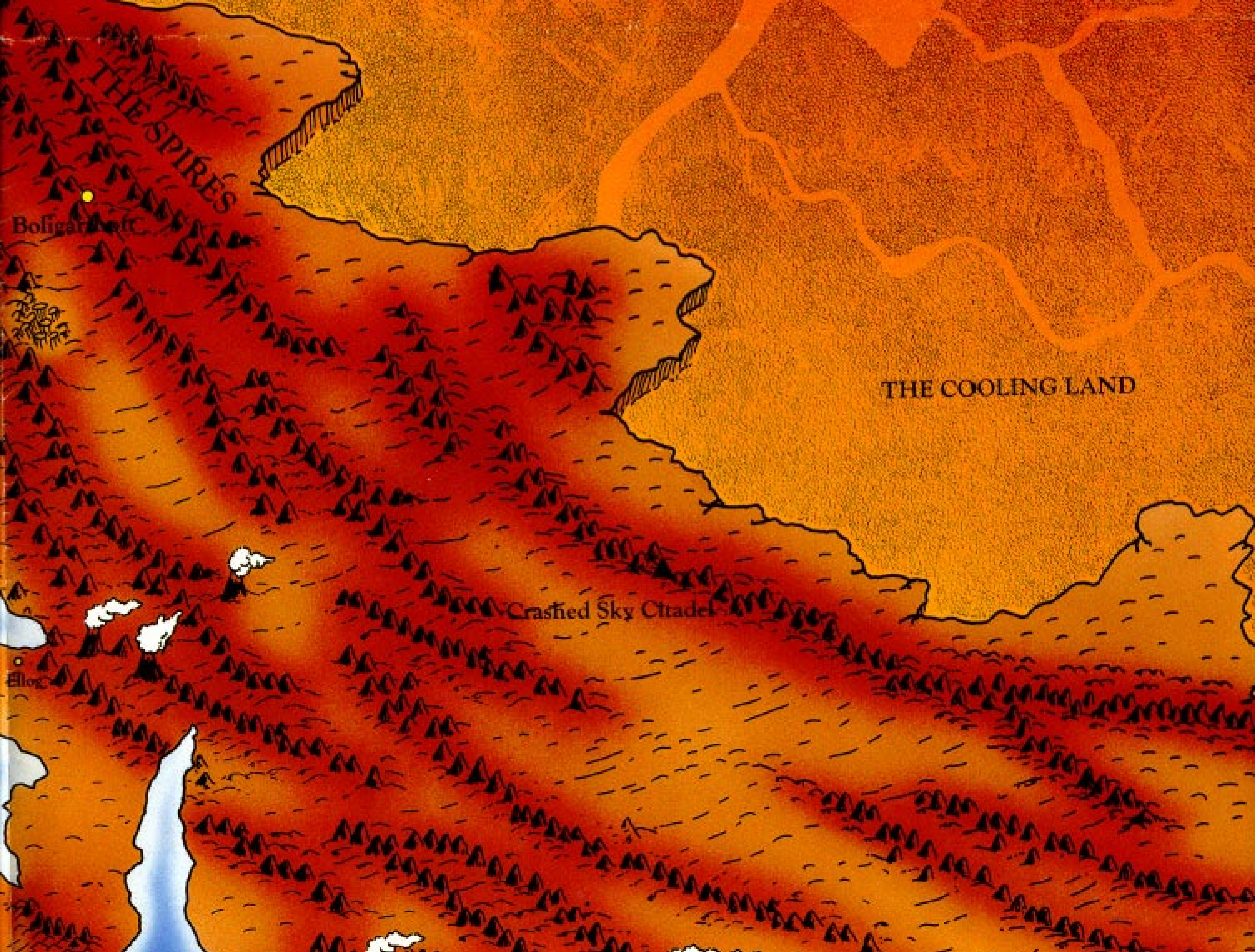


Ichabrutichach
Kapunis

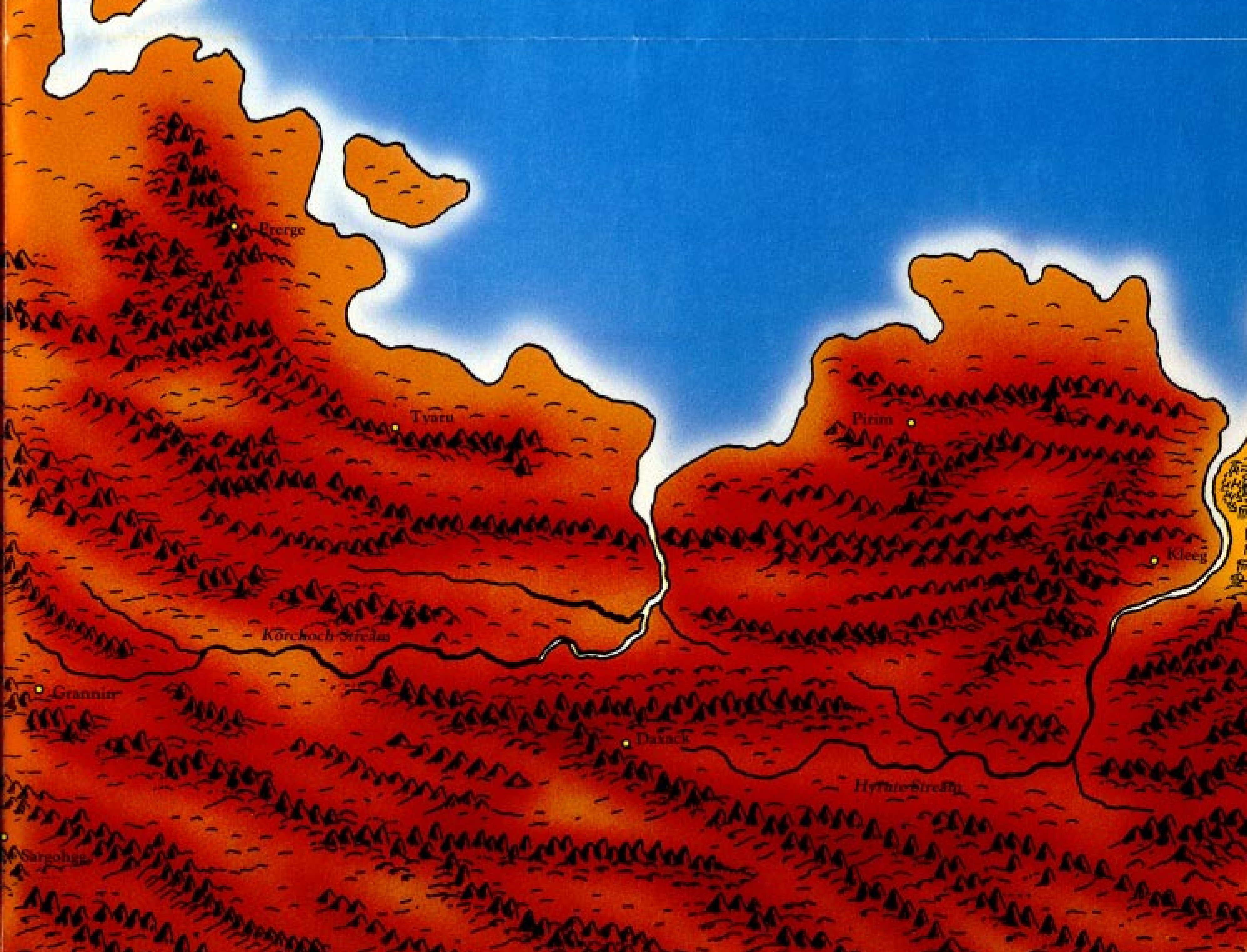

INDANALIS
SEA
Ahhar
Ethany
Stotta


MT. TAMERLIN
VALLEYS
STEAMWALL
MOUNTAINS
Calament
Plundun
Hurlock
Grobb
GRIMM WOOD
Hussuran
Castle Vorgel
THENOL
9285XXX0701

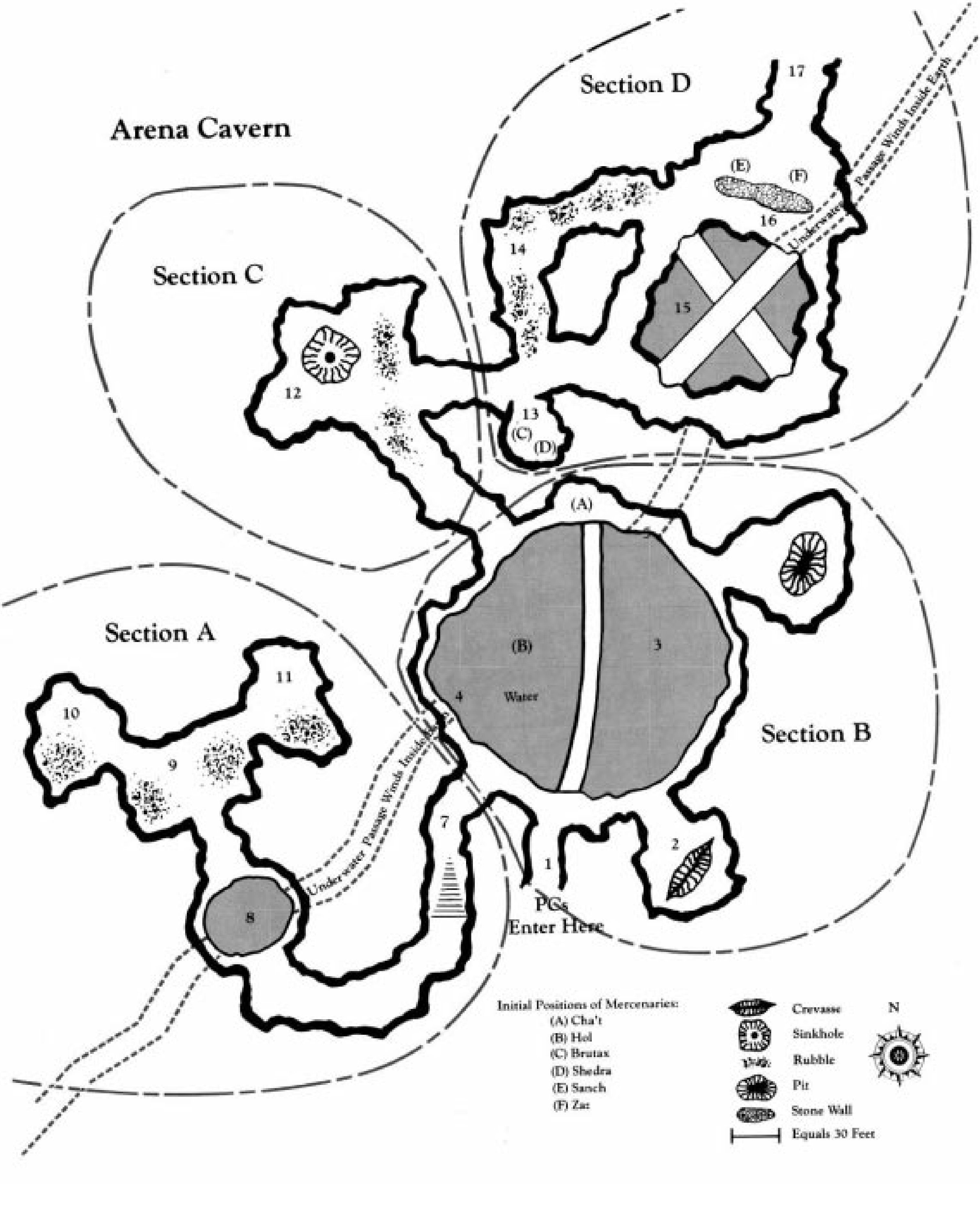

Southern Steamwall Region Map
Scale: One inch equals 10 miles
10
20
30
40
50
60
70
80
HITEHKEL
THE BURNING SEA
(GREAT LAVA SEA)


THE SPIRES
Crashed Sky Citadel
THE COOLING LAND

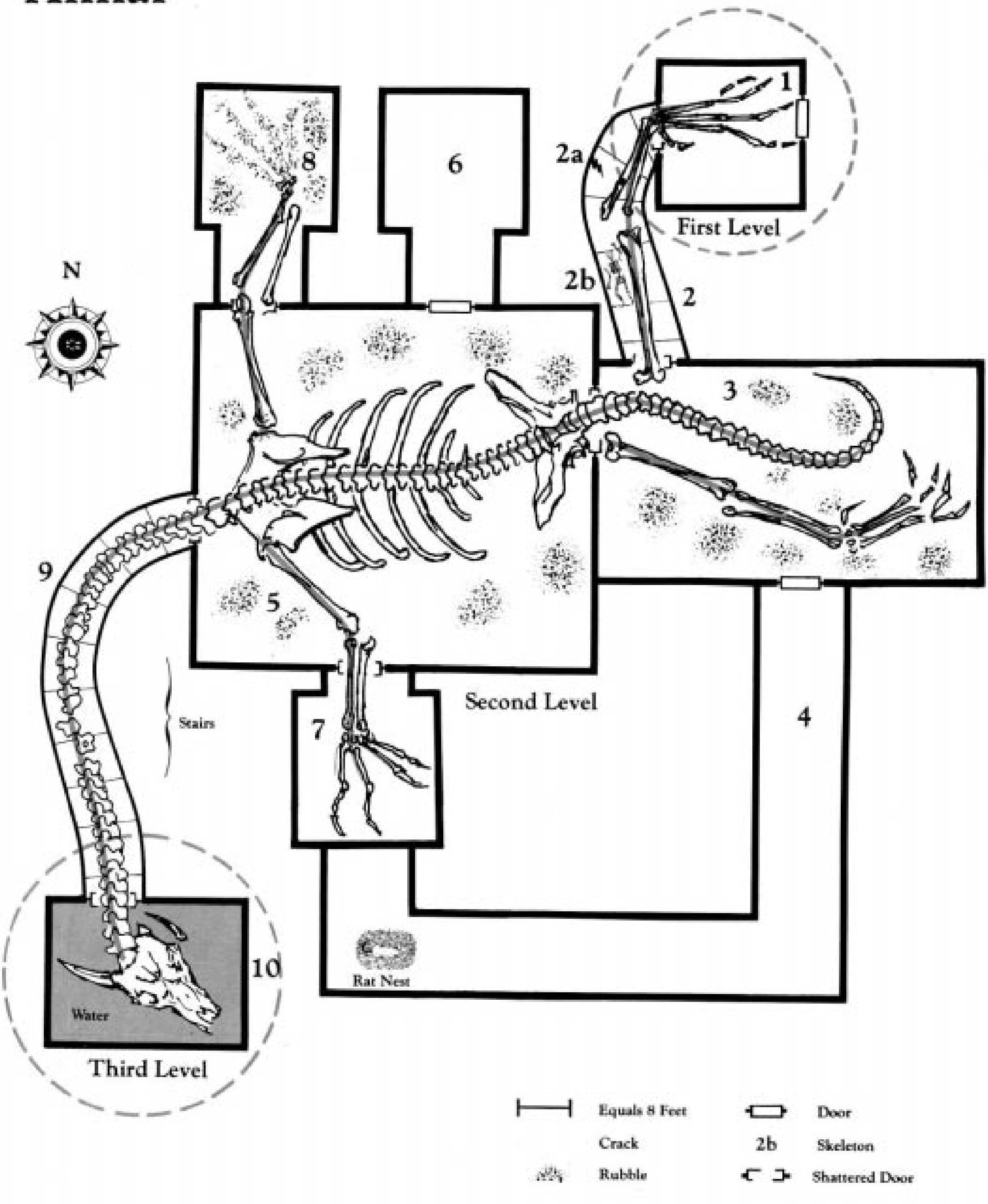

MT. KREEW
Åbo
Ghah
Horrak



Prerge
Tyaru
Pirim
Kleeg
Korchoch Stream
Grannir
Daxack


Arena Cavern
Section A
Section B
Section C
Section D
1
2
3
4
Water
(A)
(B)
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
(C)
(D)
14
15
16
(E)
(F)
17
Underwater Passage Winds Inside Earth
PCs Enter Here
Initial Positions of Mercenaries:
(A) Cha't
(B) Hol
(C) Brutax
(D) Shedra
(E) Sanch
(F) Zat
Crevasse
Sinkhole
Rubble
Pit
Stone Wall
Equals 30 Feet
N

Ahhar



1
First Level
2a
2b
2
6
8
N
3
4
5
7
Second Level
Stairs
9
10
Rat Nest
Water
Third Level
Equals 8 Feet
Crack
Rubble
Door
2b
Skeleton
Shattered Door



STEAMWALL
MARAK VALLEYS
SOUTHERN
The Conquered Lands
THE LEAGUE OF THE MINOTAURS
Vinlans
Rathlyn
Highvale
Armach-nesti
Bok

Advanced Dungeons & Dragons

DRAGONLANCE

Official Game Adventure



DRAGON KNIGHT

Someone or something is killing the Othlorx ("the Uninvolved") dragons of Taladas. Not only good dragons, but the evil ones as well. Who or what would be so angered at these dragons as to slaughter them indiscriminately? To find out, the PCs must masquerade as dragon hunters and set out to destroy dragons. It's a dangerous game—if the dragons don't get you, your employers might!

This quest will take the heroes from the alleys of rundown Gridmire through the entire Southern Steamwall region of Taladas and eventually to the Astral plane. The poisonous vapors of the Indanalis Sea have wreaked havoc with the inhabitants of this region, so be prepared to meet anything!

This AD&D® adventure, set in the world of the DRAGONLANCE® saga, is the second of an epic trilogy that begins in the previously unknown continent of Taladas and ranges out to the Astral plane. The players assume the roles of dragon hunters to discover the identity of the "master" behind the plan to wipe out the Othlorx dragons of Taladas.

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